

021904PM

TRANSCRIPT OF GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY BLUE RIBBON PANEL

Phoenix, Arizona
February 19, 2004
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REPORTED BY:
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Certified Court Reporter
Certificate No. 50207

PREPARED FOR:

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1 REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS was
2 taken on February 19, 2004, commencing at 2:08 p.m., at
3 the Department of Corrections, 1601 West Jefferson,
4 Phoenix, Arizona, before PAMELA J. MAYER, a Certified

5 Court Reporter in and for the County of Maricopa, State
6 of Arizona.

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8 PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT:

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Dennis Burke, Co-Chair

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Herb Guenther, Co-Chair

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Grant Woods, Co-Chair

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Mike Branham

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Leesa Morrison

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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MR. BURKE: My name is Dennis Burke. I'm

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the co-chief of staff of policy for Governor Napolitano.

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And I, with Senator Herb Guenther and Grant Woods, are

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co-chairs of an ad hoc advisory panel that was put

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together under the direction of the Governor to review

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the incident that occurred at Lewis on January 18th, to

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kind of go over, find the details of what led up to it,

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and to make recommendations to her and the director of

11 the Department of Corrections on what changes need to
12 occur because of that event. And we have been meeting
13 since last week, we've had over, close, now, to almost 25
14 hours of testimony and briefings, including the director,
15 who spoke for about three hours last week.

16 Since then, we've gone to the Lewis facility,
17 had close to a five- to six-hour hearing there, spoke to
18 a lot of your colleagues about many of the issues at
19 Lewis. It wasn't limited to the incident. We talked
20 about staffing and training, pay levels, and very
21 comprehensive, very open hearings. Did the same thing
22 down in Tucson the next day.

23 This morning, we heard from a panel that --
24 tactical team that worked -- tactical negotiation and
25 intelligence teams that worked on the incident for the 15

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1 days. And we also heard from Warden Gaspar from Lewis.

2 In the room here, we have a court reporter, who
3 will be making a transcript of this and will be providing
4 that to the general public when it is completed and
5 ready. And I will let my co-chairs introduce themselves,
6 give a little bit of background.

7 I would note that there are a few members of our
8 panel that are unable to be here today, all the more
9 reason why we have this transcript. Tom Stickrath, who's
10 the deputy director of the Department of Corrections of
11 Ohio, who actually flew out here last week, he's been
12 very engaged on many of the issues. Chase Riveland, who
13 was here this morning but had to fly out of town. He is
14 a former director of -- or deputy director of three
15 Departments of Corrections in three different states.

16 Sheriff Roger Vanderpool from Pinal County, and John
17 Cohen, who's a Homeland Security consultant and former
18 investigator for the United States House Judiciary
19 Committee.

20 I'll let Grant and Herb introduce themselves.

21 MR. WOODS: I'm Grant Woods. And I was Attorney
22 General for the State of Arizona from '91 to '99.

23 I want you to know that, first, as I told you,
24 we really appreciate you being here, taking the time to
25 be here. We've read your statement that you made shortly

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1 after your release, so we're familiar with that. Our
2 goal here is simply to figure out what happened before
3 and during and to see if there are things that the State
4 can do to make sure that no other officer has to go
5 through what you had to go through. That's -- I think
6 that's it. That's why we're here.

7 We're not here to cast blame or -- necessarily,
8 or to, you know -- or anything else. We just want to do
9 whatever needs to be done so that this doesn't ever
10 happen again.

11 And along those lines, I want you to know that
12 you are protected in this state by whatever you say.
13 What we want to know is what you think, you, as much as
14 anyone we're going to talk to, what you think about what
15 happened, and any suggestions, complaints, anything that
16 you have, I want you to feel free to say. As I said, I
17 was Attorney General for eight years. The Governor
18 replaced me as Attorney General. So you have two people
19 who are involved in this at a very high level who you can
20 be assured would make sure that there was never any

21 repercussions or anything for anything that you say. So
22 we want you just to feel comfortable. We are on your
23 side completely. And you can feel totally free to tell
24 us whatever you believe you'd like to tell us.

25 Lastly, I think it goes without saying for all

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1 of us that when I read through your statement, I was --
2 you couldn't help but be taken by how strong you were and
3 are and your courage, your perseverance, and I just think
4 you should know at the beginning that we believe you're a
5 real credit to, not just the Department of Corrections
6 but to the State. And I know I felt that way reading
7 it. I thought, wow, this is -- this is really a great
8 person. So we do appreciate -- we all regret what
9 happened there and that you had to go through this, but
10 we appreciate the way you handled yourself, and we're
11 proud of you.

12 FEMALE OFFICER: Thank you.

13 MR. BURKE: Herb.

14 MR. GUENTHER: I'm Herb Guenther. Actually,
15 they call me Herbie. I used to shine his shoes when he
16 was Attorney General. But I used to be a senator. I
17 don't know why. But before that, I was a pretty happy
18 assistant swine leader of the 4H Club. So it -- I did
19 spend some time in both the House and the Senate, and
20 that's where I got involved with Corrections. I served
21 as co-chair on the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee
22 for Corrections and got involved a lot in -- when I was
23 in the Senate, in reviewing incidents, mostly dealing
24 with whistle-blowing, and worked with a lot of staff
25 around the different facilities of Corrections. That's

1 probably the reason I'm here.

2 But we're here, again, not to probe and punish
3 but to try to get constructive suggestions to make life
4 better for all corrections officers and just to make the
5 prison a better working environment overall. And we
6 thank you for taking your time to give us your input.

7 FEMALE OFFICER: I thank you all for having me
8 here. It's an experience.

9 MR. BURKE: Two other panelists here, Mike
10 Branham and Leesa Morrison.

11 Mike.

12 MR. BRANHAM: Mike Branham from the Arizona
13 Criminal Justice Commission and also doing double duty
14 right now as Director of Juvenile Directions.

15 I would echo everything that these fine folks
16 have said. I'm really proud of you. I'm proud to be a
17 fellow law enforcement person with you. I'm just glad
18 you're back.

19 FEMALE OFFICER: Thank you.

20 MR. BURKE: Leesa.

21 MS. MORRISON: I'm Leesa Berens Morrison. I'm
22 the current director of the State Liquor Department. And
23 prior to that, I was an Assistant Attorney General for
24 the last 17 years. So I've worked on some pretty big
25 cases, including the last case that I did not finish when

1 I was there was Colorado City. So I've worked on some
2 large investigations.

3 I echo what Mike echoed and the same for the

4 rest of the panel members. I have some questions for you
5 today. I want you to feel comfortable answering them.
6 But if you don't, that's okay too.

7 MR. BURKE: Any thoughts or statement?

8 FEMALE OFFICER: Pardon me?

9 MR. BURKE: Your thoughts or statement.

10 FEMALE OFFICER: Well, I definitely thank you
11 all for hanging in there with me through those days.
12 Everybody's support, knowing that I had support and
13 hearing it through the radio, of course, was -- helped me
14 through quite a bit of this. Several times, when it was
15 very down and it was time to give up, I felt -- radio
16 definitely helped me, and knowing that I definitely had
17 the support of my state, my fellow colleagues, and
18 everybody through the nation has just been very
19 overwhelming for me, very. And the State has done
20 everything and has done more than what I ever expected.
21 And I definitely have to give hats off for that one.
22 There's a lot to say and a lot of thanks that I
23 definitely will do later, when the time comes and
24 everything, but this isn't about now.
25 I know that you all have heard from my fellow

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1 colleagues on everything that really needs to be changed,
2 and it is true. There are quite a few things.

3 Working with most of these officers, as they
4 come in, it's a fly-by job, especially with the bonus
5 that was given out. Hearing most of them say, "After my
6 two years, I'm gone." Not everybody felt like that,
7 though. I, of course, was hired during the bonus. I was
8 previously an officer before. And it runs in my blood,

9 and every job that I went to after I quit the first time
10 was not there. You know, it was not what I was looking
11 for. And that's part of the reason I came back, was
12 because this is my career. I loved my job.

13 The bonus for most of these people was since --
14 I'm guessing that the bonus started right around 9/11.
15 And a lot of jobs were hit hard, so a lot of these people
16 that have come into the Department, it's a fly-by job.
17 Computer experts is a job just to have a job to bring in
18 money.

19 Most of the officers don't feel like that,
20 especially ones that have been around for a while. You
21 can -- the fellow, you know -- when you have so much time
22 with these people like we do in our units and we spend a
23 lot of time with each other, because there's eight to ten
24 hours, and we talk, and some of us hang out with others,
25 we can usually tell who's going to be there for a while

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1 and who's not. Unfortunately, I know at the beginning,
2 you can't really tell through the interviews. And I know
3 that -- you know, I wish there was a way to distinguish
4 that more clearly in the intaking of these officers.

5 Like I said, you know, this is my career. This
6 is what I want to do for the rest of my life. I'm not a
7 spring chicken anymore, you know. That was earlier on.

8 The pay is definitely another issue,
9 unfortunately. Most of my fellow officers have to work
10 two and three jobs. And I hear about it, where they're
11 going from -- after their eight hours or ten hours with
12 the Department, they go and do another four or five
13 hours, and I've heard even someone say that they have

14 another full-time job. So, when they're coming back to
15 work, their minds aren't clear and focused sometimes.
16 Not all the time, but sometimes.

17 And the reason they're working that second job
18 is so that they can support their family, which leads
19 into pay, you know. If there's a way to get more money
20 into the system, I think there would be a lot more -- a
21 lot better officers who want to make this their career.

22 I myself, I look at the pay, and I have one
23 child and a partner that I try to support. And when
24 times are hard -- right now, it's just me and my family.
25 I'm the sole supporter. I don't make that much. And I

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1 make too much for welfare. I'm glad about that, but to
2 make ends meet, it's real difficult.

3 That's why the turnover is the way that it is.
4 They're looking for something better that's paying them
5 more.

6 Some people just can't handle the stress,
7 because, you know, there is a lot of stress going in
8 there day after day and knowing that, you know, we
9 have -- we are working with people who have manslaughter
10 convictions, rapists, burglary, assault with a deadly
11 weapon. That is our job. Yeah, we know it. But
12 unfortunately, some of the officers get complacent.
13 They're doing the same thing day after day. They've been
14 in the same prison for, let's say Morey -- you know, over
15 at Morey unit, six years, on the same shift.

16 A lot of inexperience, personally. When I
17 worked over in Florence, we had officers there that had
18 been working for 20, 25 years. If you had more years

19 than just ten, I knew my back was covered with you,
20 because you weren't going anywhere, you've been there for
21 ten years. You've been there for, you know, seven
22 years. I had more -- I relied on them more. They saw
23 and they've seen more.
24 Lewis, I don't know about the other units, but I
25 know at our unit, there's not too many people that worked

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1 anywhere else but Lewis. And six years just isn't a lot,
2 to me. You know, Florence Central unit, where death row
3 is, is. The inexperience over at Lewis isn't -- is very
4 high inexperience people. Not to degrade them, because
5 different units are different situations. But the
6 overturn is just there. It's high.

7 Other points I want to include were
8 understaffing. You know, they have levels on the units
9 that's D level, which is lowest level, and you have two
10 officers over that. That's not a lot of staffing when
11 you're talking about ten people to, what is it, 600 and
12 something inmates or 500 and something inmates on
13 graveyard. Granted, the inmates aren't out there that
14 much, out at that time. But that's still not a lot of
15 staffing, to me, personally, to make my job safer. When
16 you're having two people in a housing unit doing security
17 checks and nobody else, it's an eerie feeling, because
18 you're relying on your fellow officer, and you're hoping
19 that that officer isn't complacent, or takes his job
20 seriously, and it's not a joke, it's not a stepping
21 stone.

22 Unfortunately, that night, my life, I think, was
23 just a stepping stone for somebody else, maybe, or

24 complacent. Of course, my life is a lot different now
25 than what it was then.

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1 We go through training. And I think the best
2 training I ever had was a simulation that was done on me
3 where an officer dressed up like an -- you know, an
4 inmate and took over my control room. I wasn't the one
5 that popped the doors. It shows you, you know. And my
6 fellow officer was there for, you know, three years, I
7 think. But without thinking about it, just popped
8 doors.

9 Unfortunately, there's a lot of complacency.
10 You're doing the same thing day after day. But the
11 simulation -- of course, that's what I thought the night
12 that I was taken hostage, you know. I was like, "Wow, a
13 simulation. This is just like the one I had before."
14 Needless to say, it wasn't. Surprise.

15 My train of thought got lost.

16 MR. BURKE: That's okay.

17 MS. MORRISON: You were talking about training.

18 FEMALE OFFICER: The training, yeah. We have
19 simulations. A lot of officers don't take that
20 seriously. And unfortunately -- you know, our
21 supervisors try to make them take it seriously, but when
22 they feel that, you know, "This is a drive-by job until I
23 get to the next stone that's going to pay me higher," you
24 can't really stop it.

25 And I think that the -- you know, the budget

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1 really needs to be looked at, because I don't want those
2 drive-by officers. My life is at stake every day that I

3 walk into that unit and I walk down into those housing
4 units and I'm doing security checks. And if the officer
5 before me decided to tick off inmates instead of -- you
6 know, what we call jump start them, that makes my life
7 even more, pardon the French, but hellacious. I don't
8 know what else I would describe it as, because the inmate
9 is going off on me, that officer is already gone. I'm
10 the one that's getting confronted, because I'm the one
11 that's in brown, so I'm the one that has to talk them
12 down and calm them down.

13 And we also, the -- what am I thinking of -- the
14 classification of these inmates is a big part of this,
15 because I know that both those inmates had prior escape
16 attempts or -- one had a prior escape attempt and the
17 other one had escape -- had a key. And what are they
18 doing on a level 3 yard and having access to the
19 kitchen? Sorry, it's not a level 3 yard. It's a PS
20 yard. But having access to the kitchen, where they can
21 get the tools to be able to do something like this, and
22 having aggravated assault already shooting at police
23 officers. I mean, you know, me, I don't know, you shoot
24 a police officer, I think you're pretty much willing to
25 do anything to get out, you know, to get free. It's not

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1 right for him or anybody that has that kind of background
2 to have access to tools that can allow them to do that,
3 especially when you only have one officer in the kitchen
4 because of staffing.

5 You know, there's -- I've heard from a friend of
6 mine that is a classification officer, and she -- she
7 said that they were already in the process of changing

8 the policy for that, and I just hope that it's a real
9 good one, because anybody with attempts like what they
10 had, having access, like I said, to the tools or -- it's
11 an accident waiting to happen. I know. I was there.

12 You know, this has been a definite learning
13 experience for everyone, I'm sure. I don't take life for
14 granted anymore. Several times, I knew I was going to be
15 gone.

16 During the negotiation, man, that negotiation
17 team, wow. I won't go there.

18 A lot of -- here's something else. A lot of the
19 public, they see these high-profile cases, and then they
20 think that these inmates go bye-bye and they're never
21 seen or heard before because they're locked up. We, as
22 officers, see them every day. We don't have access to
23 their case or what they're in for. All we have are
24 hearsays. Granted, it's on the Internet or whatever, but
25 as an officer, you really don't have time -- you're

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1 starting your life when you get off with your family, or
2 you're going to your second job. I think it would really
3 help for some of these officers to realize or to have
4 access to say, "Hey, you know, this one is in for 25
5 lives. He's got 25 consecutive life sentences. You
6 really need to watch it," because, unfortunately, a lot
7 of officers get complacent, again, and they don't know
8 who they're dealing with. We need to be reminded, "Hey,
9 you know, this is going on. This is who is here."

10 And the public is like, "Oh, well, they're out
11 of sight, out of mind." Well, you know, not to
12 everybody's out of sight, out of mind, because we're the

13 ones who are going out there every day, walking the
14 halls, making sure another inmate isn't getting stabbed
15 or beat, you know.

16 Of course, these inmates have a life of luxury,
17 in my opinion. Pretty much all of them have TVs, radios,
18 you know. I like -- I think it was New Jersey that I
19 heard where there's one TV in a common area that all the
20 inmates have to watch. And the public doesn't know this,
21 but there are drugs, TVs, all of that that is sold for
22 drugs, bets that they've lost, and the -- I'm not sure
23 what you would call them. The public just thinks, "Oh,
24 yeah, they should have all this." They've got a life of
25 luxury here, personally, in my opinion. "Have my brother

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1 or sister send me a TV when I'm in jail. I've got a
2 bed. I've got three meals a day. I'm happy."

3 Life needs to change for them. Let them really
4 start understanding where they're living, because to me,
5 I see this as a day-care. They're getting what they
6 want. The officers get, you know, crappy pay, barely
7 able to make ends meet, and they're getting everything
8 they want. The only thing they can't do is vote, carry
9 weapons, and if they take over the right place, they're
10 going to have it. And it's not right. It's not right
11 for them to get everything they want. But, anyway.

12 I know the State -- you know, there's a lot
13 of -- a lot of things that, during this whole situation,
14 went wrong during it that led up to it. You know,
15 policies. You've got POST orders, you've got policies,
16 you've got supervisors that say, you know, "We're going
17 to follow POST orders. We're going to ignore this

18 section, but we're going to follow this section," and
19 officers with inexperience, "Okay, whatever." You know,
20 those are the ones that put, you know -- that -- it's not
21 right. You know, it's -- it's a security issue,
22 definitely.

23 Unfortunately, things roll downhill, so when us
24 officers are being told by our sergeants and stuff to do
25 something, no, we don't have to do it, we can write, you

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1 know, an information report, and then we get dogged,
2 because that supervisor is still our supervisor. You
3 know, it's -- it's a hard situation. I don't want to be
4 in Dora's spot. She can have that job. I don't even
5 want to make deputy warden anymore.

6 MR. BRANHAM: We're going to help you work up to
7 that. You don't really have to go from officer to
8 director. We can help you work into that.

9 FEMALE OFFICER: No, I don't even want to work
10 into it, you know.

11 I welcomed Dora, after six months being into the
12 system, welcomed her with a hostage situation. I
13 remember the first day that she came into our COTA class
14 and spoke, and I admired her from the first time I saw
15 her. So, needless to say, my first words to her is, you
16 know, "Welcome to Arizona," you know. And poor Cam
17 Hunter, welcomed her with open arms too. "Here's a
18 welcoming factor to you. Let's see how you do, you know,
19 in this situation."

20 I'm trying to make a bad thing humorous, because
21 that's really all I have left. I have no patience
22 anymore. Hopefully, I will get that back. So, being in

23 the family I was raised in, I have my sense of humor, and
24 I make light of terrible things, and then later on, I'll
25 break down and do whatever I need to do.

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1 I wanted to make a point about inspections. I'm
2 not sure if we have this. I know I never see it. But
3 maybe this can be answered or maybe this can be a
4 thought, but maybe going in and really checking some of
5 these officers and checking the supervisor, instead of
6 just stopping at the deputy warden, if that happens, but
7 really checking to see some of these officers to make
8 sure they're not getting complacent, to make sure that
9 the, you know, policies and procedures are being
10 followed, some kind of inspections of simulations so
11 that -- because we do what we call simulations. Are you
12 all familiar with simulations?

13 MR. BRANHAM: Yes.

14 FEMALE OFFICER: Okay. A lot of people don't
15 take them seriously.

16 MR. BRANHAM: That's right.

17 FEMALE OFFICER: And that's unfortunate. It
18 really is. My simulations, I take very serious. I
19 don't -- I guess that's where the love for the job comes
20 in, because I love my job. I love what I do. It runs
21 through my blood.

22 There's got to be some kind of inspection to
23 make officers aware that, "Hey, you know, just because
24 this is a simulation doesn't mean that you're not being
25 watched or you're not being heard." We do quite a -- we

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1 do six simulations a month. That's it, six. Graveyard,
2 of course, you have all the time in the world. We tend
3 to do more. And I know that I'd like to see some kind of
4 inspection going on, making sure that this is getting
5 taken care of, that these officers are following policy
6 and procedures and not having sergeants say, "Oh, well,
7 you're new. We'll let you go this time," and then they
8 get buddy buddies, and the next time, "It's all right, no
9 big deal." It's hard to see that, hard to know that
10 that's going on. And who are you going to tell, you
11 know? Because it goes up the chain of command.
12 Everybody has got their buddies, unfortunately. Somebody
13 has got to pay at times.

14 I know that at one point I heard -- I'm not sure
15 if it was on the radio or the news, it all gets
16 intertwined with me -- something about lowering their
17 standards and how the police departments, or one of the
18 police departments have not lowered their standards, and
19 unfortunately, I think that the Department of Corrections
20 has lowered their standards. They're not looking at
21 who's coming in and are they planning on being here for a
22 long time, not just two years or three years and walking
23 out.

24 I know that during COTA, we have one week where
25 we actually go into the prison. Maybe if we can just

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1 make that just a little bit longer, you know, maybe a
2 half a day, and it gives them, you know, throughout the
3 seven weeks, a half a day of, "Okay. This is what you're
4 going to be facing every day." You know, something
5 that -- before these people start graduating, this is

6 what they're getting into. I mean, we see it on TV, what
7 the police officers go through, from Cops. You know,
8 that's how I knew I didn't want to be a cop, you know,
9 seeing what some of them went through, you know.

10 Everybody's life is at stake, I mean, you know.
11 The police officers don't know who they're pulling over.
12 The prison officers are supposed to know who they have in
13 there. And maybe, again, you know, some of these cadets
14 really into the prison system and letting them see, "Hey,
15 you know, this is what we're about. This is how it goes
16 down. This is what can happen at any time."

17 And rotating shift, not just putting them on day
18 shift, where you have twice as many people there to cover
19 you, where on swing shift, you have half the shift --
20 half the shift that you're there for has twice the
21 people, and then after that half, you're down to the bare
22 minimum. And then graveyard, you're lucky if everybody
23 shows up, or you're lucky, you know, if you have a floor
24 officer in the housing unit with you or a second officer
25 in the kitchen to help with things, instead of just

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1 somebody happening to show up early because that's what
2 he does, and maybe that set off the alarm. You know, but
3 what I hear is hearsay. I haven't been able to talk to
4 really anybody. So what I'm hearing is that the second
5 officer came in early and that was one of the things that
6 helped start off the whole IMS -- IMS. But I don't
7 know. You know, I'm up in the tower doing my own little
8 thing and having to go through what I go through.

9 Taking a look at policy and procedures and
10 making sure that they're all correct as far as the

11 classifications, because I know, where I'm at, POST
12 orders are the same in every housing unit, and every
13 housing unit has different levels. And when they're all
14 reading the same and you have, like I said before,
15 sergeants and lieutenants saying, "Hey, you know, we'll
16 follow this section but not this one for that one, and
17 this is to be followed here, and this one isn't to be
18 here." We can start working on some of those POST orders
19 too, which I'm sure is already being started.

20 And that's really -- that's really all I have to
21 touch base on, you know. Let's get some more funding
22 in. If we can make the public more aware that maybe we
23 do need more funding and that, you know, just because
24 we're correction officers doesn't mean that we're not
25 human and we don't have lives and we have families to

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1 feed and our job is dangerous. I think this is -- you
2 know, unfortunately, maybe this is how it has to be said,
3 for this situation to happen, maybe this is what needs to
4 bring it out. Of course, I could have, you know, stayed
5 at home and missed this whole thing, but the man upstairs
6 apparently wanted me here, or there, should I say.

7 So that's really all I have.

8 MR. BURKE: Thank you.

9 Grant, do you want to go first?

10 MR. WOODS: The -- you talked a lot about
11 complacency. Obviously, the other officer made a mistake
12 in opening the door to the tower. Do you think it was --
13 was it complacency, or had that been going on on some
14 sort of regular basis, that officers were able to come
15 over there -- let's start with this. Were officers able

16 to come over there and just hang out in the tower, or did
17 people drop in just to shoot the bull, or -- was it
18 unusual for an officer to come over there like that?

19 FEMALE OFFICER: No, it's not unusual. You have
20 yard officers that go around the different housing units
21 doing security checks, bringing out work crews at night.
22 With some officers, no, it's not -- it's not usual for
23 them just to pop gates open. I myself, I don't. I have
24 to see who you are or I have to hear your voice. And if
25 I don't recognize your voice and I don't hear or see your

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1 face, you don't come in, because, like I said, I was -- I
2 was broken in very early with a simulation like that.
3 Shoot the bull, yeah, when you've got a break, just to
4 talk, break the monotony.

5 MR. WOODS: Do you think that can be stopped?
6 Could you have a rule that just said, you're not going to
7 let anybody in, unless they have some official business?

8 FEMALE OFFICER: You know what? Our sergeant,
9 about, I want to say two weeks to a month before, had
10 said, "There's no more hanging out in the tower. This is
11 how it's going to be. The yard officers and the extras
12 on the yard will be doing security checks," where,
13 before, we were doing -- before we got our lieutenant, we
14 were just doing hourly checks, and then when we got our
15 new lieutenant, he said, "No, there's going to be half an
16 hour checks. That's what the POST orders say. That's
17 what we're going to do." So everybody was cleared out
18 from the tower.

19 There's a refrigerator that's up there. Kitchen
20 officers, yard officers leave their food in there. They

21 have to be able to eat. And depending on, you know, when
22 they had time to eat, they'd go up there, grab their
23 food, heat it up, out they went, because that's what the
24 sergeant wanted, and that's what the lieutenant wanted.

25 MR. WOODS: What other POST orders -- can you

25

1 give me some examples of other POST orders that were
2 ignored at Lewis?

3 FEMALE OFFICER: All the POST orders in the
4 housing units were the same, unfortunately, and has been,
5 I think I read on there, from 2002. They were not
6 updated.

7 As far as any that were ignored or -- I couldn't
8 tell you.

9 MR. WOODS: Over time, then, did people just
10 come up with their own way of proceeding, then,
11 regardless of what the POST order was?

12 FEMALE OFFICER: I couldn't tell you. I mean, I
13 imagine with some officers, yeah, because not everybody
14 follows all the rules. So, in my mind, they're making
15 their own orders. They're not following what's written.

16 MR. WOODS: Were people ever disciplined for
17 that?

18 FEMALE OFFICER: At times, yes. And at times, I
19 saw that they weren't.

20 MR. WOODS: We talked with the negotiation team
21 or some members of it today and heard that side of it,
22 but you were on the other side of it, to an extent, in
23 that you got to see inside the tower reaction to the
24 negotiating team tactics day to day. And I'm wondering
25 what you could tell us as far as -- this was a long

1 period of time. What do you recall being effective on
2 these two prisoners, and were there things that weren't
3 effective and maybe were having an opposite effect?

4 FEMALE OFFICER: When the negotiating team
5 would -- how can I put this? There had to be somebody
6 that was negotiating that clicked with Wassenaar. If he
7 did not have that click, and I do believe there was only
8 two or three people that he had a click with, when the
9 click was not there, life was hell. That's all there
10 is. There was no way of negotiating with him. There was
11 no way of doing what -- doing anything positive. And he
12 would set the negotiation up at times to see if they were
13 lying. And if the negotiation team lied, it wasn't
14 pretty in there.

15 MR. WOODS: Did that happen?

16 FEMALE OFFICER: I feel that, yeah. And the
17 lack of communication between the tac team and I'm
18 guessing negotiation, from what I heard.

19 I remember one, when he was talking to a female
20 negotiator, and everything was fine, and I guess tactical
21 decided to cut the fence and not tell her, and she knew
22 nothing about it. And that was the day that I believe me
23 and Auch was fixing to get our heads shot off. And
24 there's got to be some kind of communication between
25 tactical and negotiators.

1 MR. WOODS: Was the negotiator denying that was
2 going on?

3 FEMALE OFFICER: I have not been able -- she --
4 from my understanding, and this is just hearing over the

5 phone and hearing Wassenaar's replies, is that he didn't
6 believe her at first, and then later on, he's like, you
7 know, "She's -- I can hear the honesty in her voice. She
8 didn't know what was going on." I think that she didn't
9 know what was going on.

10 MR. WOODS: Do you wish that the two or three
11 that clicked with him, did you wish that they would have
12 been the only ones talking to him?

13 FEMALE OFFICER: Oh, yes. Definitely. Oh,
14 definitely.

15 MR. WOODS: So when you heard someone else was
16 on the line, did you kind of shudder?

17 FEMALE OFFICER: Oh, God, yes. I hid my head,
18 and I rocked back and forth and prayed and just hoped
19 that they did not piss him off to where he decided to
20 shoot me, because my life was depending on the
21 negotiating.

22 MR. WOODS: What about some of their tactics,
23 like turning off the water, things like that? Do you --
24 what sort of reaction did that get?

25 FEMALE OFFICER: The first time, he didn't

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1 really react to it, you know. He figured a way to get it
2 turned back on, and it was.

3 And the second time, it really ticked him off,
4 made him upset, because he wanted to go down there, and
5 he was used to being able to wash up daily and brush his
6 teeth and, you know, take a birdbath.

7 MR. WOODS: Do you think that second time, did
8 that move him more towards surrender, or no?

9 FEMALE OFFICER: Yeah, I think it did, because
Page 23

10 he was very, from what I gathered from him, he liked
11 taking care of himself. He liked making sure that he was
12 cleaned up and, you know, washed up, teeth brushed, brush
13 his teeth two, three times.

14 MR. WOODS: If that tactic would have been done
15 earlier than very late in the game there, is it your
16 perception that it might have worked, or do you think
17 that period of time had to go by?

18 FEMALE OFFICER: I really honestly don't know.

19 MR. WOODS: There's some discussion of whether
20 or not if they would have taken out Wassenaar, which they
21 had the opportunity to do, the fear was always that you
22 couldn't take one out because they might do something to
23 you, but if they would have taken out Wassenaar, the
24 question is, would Coy have folded, since Wassenaar
25 appears to have been the leader. And they told us today

29

1 they didn't want to take that risk. I wonder if you have
2 any perception, if Wassenaar would have been killed, what
3 would have happened.

4 FEMALE OFFICER: Coy had 185 years to live, and
5 it was made very clear to me at the beginning that he had
6 no problem with losing his life, which meant that if he
7 was going to lose his life, at the beginning, it was me
8 and Auch, we're going to lose ours, at the end, it was
9 going to be me. Every time Wassenaar went up on top of
10 that tower, I had the gun pointed right at me, at my
11 head. So if they would have taken out Wassenaar, there's
12 no doubt in my mind, he would take me out. He had no
13 problem.

14 MR. WOODS: And once they found themselves in

15 this situation, barricaded in the tower, could you tell
 16 us about -- and I think you discussed this in your
 17 debriefing, but that they really seemed to have a desire
 18 to go out in a blaze of glory and to take a bunch of
 19 officers with them. That was really maybe how they saw
 20 this ending, was that they were going to try to kill as
 21 many officers as possible. Is that right?

22 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, sir.

23 MR. WOODS: What did they say about that?

24 FEMALE OFFICER: They would take five, but
 25 they'd love to have ten. But if they rushed in, they

30

1 could at least get one each, maybe two each. And of
 2 course, one of those being me.

3 MR. WOODS: Thank you.

4 MR. BURKE: Thank you, Grant.
 5 Senator.

6 MR. GUENTHER: Did you expect that you would see
 7 a tactical team at some point in time?

8 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, and I was praying that I
 9 wouldn't. I was very thankful that the order was not
 10 given to rush the tower when it was just me.

11 Now, at the beginning, hey, you know, there's
 12 two of us, you know. I don't even know if, at the
 13 beginning -- you know -- rushing the tower was not an
 14 option, and I knew that.

15 MR. GUENTHER: So you were basically resigned to
 16 the fact that we had to get some other way to --

17 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes.

18 MR. GUENTHER: -- get you out of there.

19 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes.

20 MR. GUENTHER: When you first -- you were saying
21 that, when you got to your notes, "Wow, the negotiating
22 team." And then you said, "Well, I don't think I'm going
23 to go there."

24 FEMALE OFFICER: There was a few of those
25 negotiators I think need to go back through school and

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1 really look at what they're doing, because, yeah, wow.
2 They're definitely in the wrong field.

3 MR. GUENTHER: Got a little tense?

4 FEMALE OFFICER: Not just a little.

5 MR. GUENTHER: Who did you fear more? Coy or
6 Wassenaar?

7 FEMALE OFFICER: At the beginning, Wassenaar.
8 At the end, Coy.

9 MR. GUENTHER: And did you -- well, let me just
10 say this. As an officer that had been in several other
11 institutions and had -- you had gone back through COTA a
12 second time. Is that correct?

13 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, sir.

14 MR. GUENTHER: How can you compare your COTA
15 training from your first time around to the second time?

16 FEMALE OFFICER: The second time, I knew that
17 this was going to be my career and that this is
18 definitely what I wanted to do for the rest of my life.
19 The first time, I was young. I wasn't sure -- I mean, I
20 wanted to be a DEA agent, you know, undercover
21 narcotics. The second time, I knew this was it. The
22 training, I took a lot more seriously, and I took
23 everything to heart, and I got higher grades.

24 MR. GUENTHER: Did you feel the quality of the

25 training had changed since you went through it the first

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1 time?

2 FEMALE OFFICER: No, not really.

3 MR. GUENTHER: Basically the same.

4 FEMALE OFFICER: Basically the same.

5 MR. GUENTHER: When you found yourself in the
6 tower, obviously not in control, were there things about
7 your training that kind of flashed back through that
8 either you wished you had or had had more of?

9 FEMALE OFFICER: There's a lot of things that
10 popped into my mind, like, I remember reading something
11 that said that there will be no negotiating for
12 hostages. So that's one of the things that flashed back
13 into my mind, was, hey, you know, I'm already dead,
14 because there's going to be no negotiating. You know,
15 this is going to end up and it's going to end up like
16 this.

17 I remember -- I don't know if it was through
18 COTA or what, but I -- I think that my instincts just
19 kicked in. I really do. Nothing prepares you for this.
20 You know, I wish there was, you know, something that
21 could, but there's really not, because you never know
22 what your fellow officer is going to do. And you're
23 hoping that they're the ones who are following policy and
24 procedures, if you're the one that's working with them.
25 I did.

33

1 MR. GUENTHER: Did you -- I mean, here comes
2 Wassenaar up the spiral. Did you -- at that point in

3 time, did you have any discomfort, I mean, that you --
4 any reason to be concerned or feel like something else
5 was wrong?

6 FEMALE OFFICER: My stomach started turning when
7 the first gate was popped. And I asked him who it was.
8 And he said, "I don't know." That's when my stomach
9 turned.

10 MR. GUENTHER: And Wassenaar gets to the top of
11 the staircase, and that is a tremendously confined area,
12 right there, in the spiral. And he's got this paddle.
13 How does he --

14 FEMALE OFFICER: Which is tucked away, on his
15 side.

16 MR. GUENTHER: How does he get it out and have
17 time to swing that paddle so hard that he knocks your
18 fellow officer basically out?

19 FEMALE OFFICER: He had it tucked to his side.
20 And when I saw him come up, I thought this was going to
21 be another simulation. And when he said, "You're getting
22 complacent," or something to that effect, and then by
23 that time, he reared back and hit Auch. And that's when
24 I knew it wasn't.

25 MR. GUENTHER: And besides the paddle, did he

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1 have his shank with him at that time?

2 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes. I remember him holding it
3 to my throat.

4 MR. GUENTHER: Do you have any sense, I mean,
5 where -- where they get the materials for those shanks?

6 FEMALE OFFICER: These inmates have 24/7 to
7 figure out how to make shanks. And the metal, they said

8 it was thanks to DOC. So I'm guessing that it came in in
9 something. And it -- something that always comes in, I'm
10 guessing, because, from what I understood, they had three
11 or four of them.

12 MR. GUENTHER: And was there any other
13 conversations that you overheard that -- where they might
14 have discussed either planning for this event or any
15 other -- any other people involved?

16 FEMALE OFFICER: I heard them at one point say
17 that somebody else was supposed to join them but
18 chickened out, but I didn't get a name. I'm trained to,
19 you know, try to get names and eavesdrop. That's what
20 I'm trained for.

21 MR. GUENTHER: I understand.

22 FEMALE OFFICER: And unfortunately, I didn't
23 have a pen and a piece of paper to write down, you know,
24 who it was.

25 MR. GUENTHER: Make a note of that.

35

1 The -- and I'm going to stop after this
2 question, but did you ever hear Wassenaar talk about
3 shaving his beard off?

4 FEMALE OFFICER: Yeah. He said he shaved.

5 MR. GUENTHER: But that's --

6 FEMALE OFFICER: That's after the hostage -- the
7 hostage situation started.

8 MR. GUENTHER: Right.

9 Did he ever mention where the razor came from or
10 anything like that?

11 FEMALE OFFICER: They get razors.

12 MR. GUENTHER: He had an electric razor in the

13 kitchen.

14 FEMALE OFFICER: That's right. He did. I have
15 no idea.

16 MR. GUENTHER: Again, thank you for your
17 efforts.

18 FEMALE OFFICER: Thank you.

19 MR. BURKE: Mike needs to get going.

20 Do you want to ask a few questions?

21 MR. BRANHAM: I've got to leave and meet with
22 the Governor, and I apologize to you. Just a quick
23 question.

24 When you left the facility, did you feel like
25 the medics took good care of you there and your arrival

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1 to the hospital was like you would have expected it?

2 FEMALE OFFICER: That's another thing. I'm glad
3 you brought that up.

4 The hospital in itself and the medics and
5 everybody, I feel was very -- did a great job. They took
6 blood, and they took urine, and I figured, okay, I'm
7 going to get tested. Being a rape victim, I would expect
8 that. My blood was never tested. My urine was never
9 tested. Coy's blood and urine was never tested.

10 And I'd like to make a point, is there any way
11 that we can get these inmates, since I am a victim here,
12 that there should be something that, as soon as they
13 commit this, that just, bypass the paperwork and having
14 to track people down and relive the story, to get them
15 immediately tested and have the victim also tested for
16 everything instead of having to, oh, well, I've got to go
17 50 miles out of my way ten days later to go get tested,

18 and now I've passed everything to my family, if -- I pray
19 it doesn't happen, but if I was to get something.

20 MR. BRANHAM: Well, thanks for letting us know
21 about that. That's one of the things that we want to
22 look at.

23 FEMALE OFFICER: I'm glad you reminded me.
24 Thank you. Because I'm very strong about that one too.

25 MR. BRANHAM: And, listen, I apologize to you

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1 for having to leave in the middle of this.

2 FEMALE OFFICER: I understand. Thank you very
3 much.

4 MR. BRANHAM: Let me know if there's anything I
5 can ever do to help you.

6 FEMALE OFFICER: Not a problem.

7 MR. BRANHAM: Excuse me, panelists.

8 (Mr. Branham exited the room.)

9 MR. BURKE: Leesa.

10 MS. MORRISON: Officer, have you spoken to the
11 victim services people at the County Attorney's Office
12 about your problems with getting tested and everything
13 you had to go through?

14 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, I have. Now, what they've
15 done about it, I have no idea. I do know that as soon as
16 my caseworker was told about it, she got me set up with
17 the forensic doctor. And when I had asked her about it,
18 she's like, "I thought the hospital was doing it. It
19 should be a part of their trauma service for rape
20 victims," which apparently it's not.

21 MS. MORRISON: So is everything taken care of
22 now?

23 FEMALE OFFICER: I have been tested. I have not
24 gotten the results yet.

25 MS. MORRISON: Can I go backwards? I just want

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1 to get some of your background. How does your salary now
2 compare with your salary when you started at DOC?

3 FEMALE OFFICER: Not very much more than what it
4 was then.

5 MS. MORRISON: Do you mind telling us in money
6 terms?

7 FEMALE OFFICER: You know, I really couldn't
8 tell you, you know. I see what I bring home as far as
9 take-home and what the state takes, what federal takes,
10 what insurance takes, what dental takes, what vision
11 takes, and the check just gets smaller and smaller. And
12 so I look at that and go, "Figure it out. Figure out how
13 we're going to pay the bills." So I really couldn't tell
14 you.

15 I know that the first time that I came through,
16 I think I was making 10.81 when I left. And that was
17 back in '96.

18 MS. MORRISON: What is your current title now?
19 The same as when you left?

20 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, ma'am.

21 MS. MORRISON: And what title is that?

22 FEMALE OFFICER: Correctional officer 2.

23 MS. MORRISON: Did you receive any special
24 training in posting -- having the post at the tower?

25 FEMALE OFFICER: I received training, but I also

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1 heard that Auch never received training, one on one.

2 MS. MORRISON: Where did you receive training?

3 FEMALE OFFICER: I received training from my
4 training officer when I started graveyard.

5 MS. MORRISON: So it was on-the-job training.

6 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, ma'am.

7 MS. MORRISON: Did you receive any training
8 while you were at the academy?

9 FEMALE OFFICER: Working in the tower?

10 MS. MORRISON: Yes.

11 FEMALE OFFICER: No, ma'am.

12 MS. MORRISON: Did you ever receive any training
13 while at COTA about what to do in a hostage situation?

14 FEMALE OFFICER: Again, you know, I can't
15 remember if it was the training or if it -- you know,
16 I -- I just couldn't tell you on that one.

17 MS. MORRISON: On January 18th, the day
18 everything took place at Lewis, can you describe your
19 shift that day, kind of set the scene, and if you thought
20 that there was anything going to happen, if you had any
21 indication something was going to happen that morning?

22 FEMALE OFFICER: I had no indication. I do
23 remember my lieutenant announcing in briefing that we
24 were not going to have a simulation.

25 MS. MORRISON: But then you thought it was a

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1 simulation.

2 FEMALE OFFICER: Then I thought it was a
3 simulation, saying, okay, he pulled our legs, he got us,
4 you know. He's trying to see how the response is going
5 to be.

6 MS. MORRISON: So you were starting the day at

7 your normal shift and your post was in the tower.

8 FEMALE OFFICER: The upper tower, yes, ma'am.

9 MS. MORRISON: And can you just describe the
10 difference between the upper tower versus the lower
11 tower, what your job duties were.

12 FEMALE OFFICER: The upper tower takes control
13 of the weapon when the level 4 inmates come out for yard
14 recreation, meals being fed. That particular day was a
15 Sunday morning. They were not going to be fed in the
16 morning. They get fed brunch and supper. So no inmates
17 were going to be coming out for breakfast, but recreation
18 would be coming out.

19 MS. MORRISON: In order to work on the second
20 floor of the tower, you have to be AR-15 trained. Right?

21 FEMALE OFFICER: Correct.

22 MS. MORRISON: Was Officer Auch trained?

23 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes.

24 MS. MORRISON: AR-15 trained?

25 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes.

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1 MS. MORRISON: And you just said a minute ago,
2 you heard that he wasn't trained in the tower. Why did
3 you say that?

4 FEMALE OFFICER: Well, there's two different
5 levels, like you said, in the tower. You have the
6 weapons, which is called the upper tower, and then the
7 lower tower is where he was posted at, which runs the
8 control panels, lets people in and out, and he was not
9 properly trained there, from my understanding from him.

10 MS. MORRISON: Can you explain how Wassenaar
11 entered the tower, step by step.

12 FEMALE OFFICER: Are you talking about as far as
13 him pushing the button?

14 MS. MORRISON: Yes.

15 FEMALE OFFICER: Auch popping him in, see the
16 top of the head, I don't know who it is, eerie stomach
17 feeling. Pops the second door before I can say, "Stop.
18 Don't." And then the lower tower stairwell door is on
19 access, and he just pops in and walks up and has the
20 ladle under his jacket, holding it, you know, where you
21 can't see it, and then making the statement, "You're
22 complacent," or something.

23 And I just see his face, and I'm like, "Who are
24 you?" And then rearing back and hitting Auch. And then
25 I went after him.

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1 MS. MORRISON: Then what happened?

2 FEMALE OFFICER: He -- I'm guessing he hit me in
3 my eye with his knee. And I fell to the ground.

4 MS. MORRISON: Did you pass out?

5 FEMALE OFFICER: No.

6 MS. MORRISON: What happened?

7 FEMALE OFFICER: Auch was then handcuffed, and
8 then I was.

9 MS. MORRISON: Going backwards for a second,
10 when you said the door was on access, was this something
11 that the other officer put on access, or was it
12 automatically on access?

13 FEMALE OFFICER: It was always on access.

14 MS. MORRISON: Had you ever discussed this door
15 being on access and it being a problem, with anybody?

16 FEMALE OFFICER: It was -- always was. I just
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17 figured that's the way they ran it, because it's been
18 like that since I came.

19 MS. MORRISON: How long had you been out there?

20 FEMALE OFFICER: Four months, because I had two
21 months of COTA training.

22 MS. MORRISON: Do you know what the level of
23 experience of the officers working the early morning
24 shift on the morning of January 18th, how does it compare
25 with the level of the other officers working at Lewis?

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1 FEMALE OFFICER: About the same.

2 MS. MORRISON: When the inmates were up on the
3 second floor of the tower, did they do anything to make
4 it more difficult so that no one could see into the
5 second floor of the tower?

6 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, ma'am.

7 MS. MORRISON: What did they do?

8 FEMALE OFFICER: They took the paper towel roll
9 out from the bathroom, spread some paper towel in the
10 windows. They took the ceiling panels and put that in
11 the windows. Biohazardous bags, put those in the window,
12 cut them up, put them in. Then when they tore down the
13 tarp, when he cut the tarp down, which, by the way, was
14 with scissors, not a shank or a knife.

15 MS. MORRISON: How did they get that stuff to
16 stick on the windows so it didn't fall down?

17 FEMALE OFFICER: They used a sheet and tied it
18 up to the -- to the poles that were going up the wall.

19 MS. MORRISON: After the first day of your
20 captivity, were you mistreated by any of the inmates
21 after that first day?

22 FEMALE OFFICER: No. I mean, besides being
23 verbally abused and talked down to, no.
24 Oh, yeah, the pinkie incident. That was a
25 couple of days later. See, I keep forgetting about that

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1 pinkie. I like my pinkie.
2 MS. MORRISON: You take it wherever you go?
3 FEMALE OFFICER: I take it wherever I go. I've
4 been living with it for the last 33 years.
5 MS. MORRISON: Can you tell us what happened on
6 the pinkie --
7 FEMALE OFFICER: It was bad negotiating, because
8 Wassenaar wanted food, and the negotiator, I remember who
9 it was, but I won't say his name, said that he was going
10 to send up bag of nasties. And that's what they call the
11 brown sacks the inmates get when they're locked down or
12 some kind of watch. And it's baloney and bread and stuff
13 like that. They, like I said, call it bag of nasties.
14 And he said that he wasn't going to take the bag of
15 nasties and if they sent up bag of nasties, they were
16 going to send down a pinkie. And so he told -- told Coy
17 to get my hand out there and chop off my pinkie.
18 MS. MORRISON: What did Coy do?
19 FEMALE OFFICER: Coy knelt down on my forearm
20 and held my hand down and had a metal rod and was pushing
21 down on it right about the knuckle. And Wassenaar was
22 screaming at him, screaming at the negotiator that if he
23 doesn't send up real food, then the pinkie was coming
24 down.
25 MS. MORRISON: What made him stop?

1 FEMALE OFFICER: The negotiator said, "Okay.
2 Calm down. Let's talk. We'll get you some food up
3 there."

4 MS. MORRISON: Besides what you've already told
5 us about problems with the negotiators, is there anything
6 that the Department or the negotiators could have done
7 differently to alleviate any of the problems that you and
8 Officer Auch suffered?

9 FEMALE OFFICER: You know, there's a lot of
10 scenarios that go through my head, you know, such as --
11 you know, there's a lot of scenarios that I thought of
12 while I was up there, such as gassing the place, food
13 poisoning. I'd be willing to eat food poisoning, you
14 know, put -- or sleeping pills, or whatever, put it in
15 the food, let me go to sleep. Then I don't even have to
16 watch you blow them away or come up.

17 I knew -- I knew that storming the tower wasn't
18 it. I knew that from the beginning. I knew it was just
19 a matter of waiting.

20 MS. MORRISON: On several occasions, you and the
21 inmates were provided with food or other small items.
22 From your perspective, was it appropriate for the
23 negotiators to send in the food or the items that the
24 inmates were requesting?

25 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes. I don't think I would

1 have sent up that much.

2 MS. MORRISON: You thought it was too much?

3 FEMALE OFFICER: I thought it was too much food,
4 especially for Auch's release, because then I knew they

5 had enough food to stay up there as long as they wanted,
6 as long as the food held up. But then again, if they
7 wouldn't have provided the amount, then Auch wouldn't
8 have been able to leave. And then you've still got two
9 officers instead of one.

10 MS. MORRISON: Seeing their demeanor and
11 experiencing their demeanor over the 15 days, do you
12 think that you would have been harmed further if the food
13 had not been provided?

14 FEMALE OFFICER: Yeah. By Wassenaar. He got
15 really irritable when he got hungry.

16 MS. MORRISON: Is there anything, other than
17 what you've already discussed, from your perspective,
18 that the negotiators could have done to make your stay in
19 the tower fewer days, to shorten it?

20 FEMALE OFFICER: I remember there was a couple
21 of times that I thought that we had some really good
22 negotiating days and it could have ended up -- ended
23 sooner, like with the female negotiator, I can't remember
24 her name. But, yeah, there was a couple of times that I
25 thought it was going to end a lot sooner, it was a good

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1 day, and then something just had happened.

2 MS. MORRISON: Is there anything that you can
3 recall that you think they should have done to make it
4 end earlier, anything that they could have done that they
5 weren't doing?

6 FEMALE OFFICER: No. I think it was just a
7 matter of time and wait, you know, for him to find the
8 one that he clicks with and for that person to stay there
9 long enough to see it through.

10 MS. MORRISON: In the news the past couple days,
11 we've heard of something that people are talking about as
12 the whisper call, where Wassenaar is whispering into the
13 phone, and he suggested that there was a disagreement
14 between himself and Coy and urged the negotiators to take
15 out Coy.

16 FEMALE OFFICER: Uh-huh.

17 MS. MORRISON: Did you hear that?

18 FEMALE OFFICER: That morning, Coy was down
19 there in the bathroom getting ready, and I remember it,
20 because I thought he was talking to his sister. And he
21 was whispering. I couldn't really hear what he said.
22 But I know that when he got off, I had asked him, you
23 know, "What's going on, you know? Did I do something
24 wrong, you know?"

25 And he's like, "Loose lips sink ships."

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1 I'm like, okay. That's, like, way up in the
2 air, you know. And he goes, "I'm going to try to get you
3 out of here." And he said something about, if Coy knew
4 that Wassenaar was trying to get me out of there, Coy
5 would shoot him, because as far as he was concerned, him
6 and Coy had made a deal that, you know, both of them were
7 not coming out of there alive, and Coy would shoot him
8 just as quick as he would shoot me, for not sticking to
9 the plan.

10 MS. MORRISON: Was there ever an occasion when
11 both inmates were up on the roof at the same time?

12 FEMALE OFFICER: Oh, no. No.

13 MS. MORRISON: And you say "Oh, no," because?

14 FEMALE OFFICER: Because they already knew that,

15 you know, one could n't be up there with the other,
16 because they knew that they would be shot. When one went
17 up on the roof, the other one was down low with a gun
18 pointed at me. At first, it was Auch, you know. Then
19 after Auch left, it was just me. I really wish Auch
20 would have stayed around, you know. But -- I'm just, you
21 know, joking around.

22 MS. MORRISON: The Department of Corrections has
23 been criticized for failing to release information about
24 you and the other officers to the news media during and
25 immediately after the crisis. Do you have any thoughts

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1 on the Department's information flow to the media?

2 FEMALE OFFICER: No, I don't. I think the
3 Department of Corrections has done a wonderful job as far
4 as keeping my name, my identity, my life to myself. I
5 praise them very much for that, because, when things are
6 being released, I'm reliving the story, especially at the
7 beginning. And the media, I know, has their job, but the
8 Department of Corrections, I feel, has done an absolutely
9 wonderful job with keeping my life to myself so I can get
10 my life back, because that's -- that's the hardest part
11 of this, is I'm a total different person. Sense of
12 humor, I still have the same, but my life has changed.
13 My family's life has changed. And I'm trying to get it
14 back into order, back to reality, if you want to say
15 that, get some consistency back. And I know that the
16 Department of Corrections has tried, and has done the
17 best to their ability, I hope, if not beyond it.

18 MS. MORRISON: Part of what the panel has been
19 charged with doing is coming up with suggestions so that

20 this never happens again. Looking back at your situation
21 as a whole, what lessons do you believe that we can learn
22 to prevent this from happening again?

23 The big question, I know.

24 MR. GUENTHER: "Where can I start?"

25 MS. MORRISON: Is there something specific?

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1 You've talked about training. You've talked about

2 salary. Is there anything else that you can think of?

3 FEMALE OFFICER: You know, I'd love to get back
4 with you on that one.

5 MS. MORRISON: Okay. Anytime.

6 FEMALE OFFICER: Because, I mean, there's a
7 whole lot.

8 MS. MORRISON: Are there any physical changes
9 that you can recommend should be made at the Morey unit
10 or at the Lewis complex?

11 FEMALE OFFICER: Physical changes? How about
12 some cameras in there in the kitchen area where they
13 prepare the food? Having checks on these cameras to make
14 sure they're operating correctly, making sure that staff
15 knows how to use them. Have experience there, following
16 policies and procedures. You know, just making sure that
17 physical -- you want physical.

18 MS. MORRISON: Anything with the control panel.
19 Anything with the gates. Anything with the doors, the
20 access panel you've talked about, the access button.

21 FEMALE OFFICER: Physically, you know, not --
22 you know, control panels, doors on access, that's --
23 that's more policy. But having cameras and making sure
24 that the officers know how to operate them and move them

25 around and having, you know, cameras in there, in the

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1 kitchen, so that you can see what's going on, and in the
2 pod areas, you know, because you never know what's going
3 to happen in a housing unit either.

4 MS. MORRISON: I just have two more questions
5 for you. And I just want your opinion.

6 The County Attorney, it's my understanding, had
7 obtained a court order that would require Wassenaar and
8 Coy to be returned to Lewis after their trials. From
9 your perspective, would it be wise for them to be
10 returned there?

11 FEMALE OFFICER: No.

12 MS. MORRISON: Why?

13 FEMALE OFFICER: Because they already know the
14 faults. They know how to run the control panels now.
15 They -- I just don't think they need to be back there.

16 MS. MORRISON: Thank you.

17 MR. GUENTHER: Could I ask --

18 MR. BURKE: Senator.

19 MR. GUENTHER: -- one more follow-up.

20 You were speaking about the cameras in the
21 kitchen. Of course, one of the problems we have when we
22 were out there were the cameras don't move, for all
23 practical purposes. They're pretty much set. But in the
24 tower, when you're up on the second part of the tower, on
25 the second floor, what's your visibility like outside, as

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1 far as where the -- for instance, at either the B gate or
2 the A gate or --

3 FEMALE OFFICER: It's hard to see because of the
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4 lighting. So I guess that would be another physical
5 thing that I would want to change is the lighting.

6 MR. GUENTHER: So at night, when it goes dark,
7 it's tough to see out?

8 FEMALE OFFICER: It's not -- you have to focus
9 more, as far as, you know, just -- because the height to
10 the ground, you know, you've got -- you've got to kind of
11 focus a little bit more on who you're letting in, to
12 catch that visual.

13 The only ones that I know of that don't move are
14 the housing unit cameras, that are stuck on the outside.

15 MR. GUENTHER: So you can move the cameras in
16 the kitchen -- I mean, in the dining room?

17 FEMALE OFFICER: In the dining room and on the
18 yard.

19 MR. GUENTHER: The -- when they were
20 taking some -- some officers were trying to move some med
21 recs over to the dining hall and they had called to see
22 if it was -- the yard was clear, and I believe you
23 responded that it was not clear.

24 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes. That's correct.

25 MR. GUENTHER: And that was at Inmate

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1 Wassenaar's direction?

2 FEMALE OFFICER: Correct.

3 MR. GUENTHER: At that time, were you on the
4 second -- you were down on the first level at that time?

5 FEMALE OFFICER: Second story.

6 MR. GUENTHER: Second story.

7 When they were bringing -- well, they brought
8 the med recs out anyway. Right?

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9 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, sir.
10 MR. GUENTHER: And as they came past the tower,
11 one of the officers said he saw something unusual, like
12 horseplay on the bottom level.
13 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, sir.
14 MR. GUENTHER: Do you know -- I mean, you were
15 already cuffed, and so was Auch.
16 FEMALE OFFICER: Auch was on the bottom -- on
17 the lower level. And he was on the floor. And I'm
18 sorry, I don't horseplay like that.
19 MR. GUENTHER: No, but I guess what -- they
20 thought they were -- he saw, you know, somebody wrestling
21 around with somebody else. Do you know what they saw?
22 FEMALE OFFICER: I have no idea. I was on the
23 second level with Wassenaar.
24 MR. GUENTHER: So you were still upstairs with
25 Wassenaar.

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1 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, sir.
2 MR. GUENTHER: They didn't bring you down till
3 later.
4 FEMALE OFFICER: Correct. We were only
5 separated maybe about ten minutes, in my time, at that
6 time.
7 MR. GUENTHER: I understand. I understand.
8 Did you recall -- you were on the second floor,
9 so you --
10 FEMALE OFFICER: I might be able to. Go ahead.
11 MR. GUENTHER: Well, one officer said he knocked
12 on the window.
13 FEMALE OFFICER: I heard the banging.

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14 MR. GUENTHER: Oh, you did hear the banging.
15 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, sir.
16 MR. GUENTHER: And you were still on the second
17 level.
18 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes.
19 MR. GUENTHER: You and Wassenaar were on the
20 second level, Coy and Auch on the first level.
21 FEMALE OFFICER: No, sir. Coy was not there
22 yet.
23 MR. GUENTHER: Oh, that's right. He's still
24 outside. And thank you for reminding me.
25 So then, Wassenaar comes downstairs, he brings

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1 you down at that time, with the AR-15?
2 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, sir.
3 MR. GUENTHER: And he goes out the A door?
4 FEMALE OFFICER: B door, I do believe it was.
5 MR. GUENTHER: Oh, really. He goes --
6 FEMALE OFFICER: Towards the kitchen?
7 MR. GUENTHER: He goes -- Wassenaar goes out the
8 B door, with the rifle.
9 FEMALE OFFICER: If it's the door facing the
10 kitchen, yes, sir.
11 MR. GUENTHER: Yes. Okay.
12 And then, all of a sudden, you hear the fire, no
13 doubt. I mean --
14 FEMALE OFFICER: It was kind of hard to miss.
15 MR. GUENTHER: But he's over on the admin side
16 of the building, of the tower then.
17 FEMALE OFFICER: No, sir. That would -- so I'm
18 guessing it is the -- it's the door that's facing the

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19 chow hall, the kitchen. So whatever door you want to
20 call that door.

21 MR. GUENTHER: That's the one he's firing out?

22 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, sir.

23 MR. GUENTHER: Out that gate?

24 FEMALE OFFICER: Out that gate.

25 MR. GUENTHER: Wow. I'm trying to build this

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1 picture back in my mind, because, as I recall, Coy runs
2 out of the kitchen -- or not Coy -- Cornett.

3 FEMALE OFFICER: Coy.

4 MR. GUENTHER: Yeah, but he's chasing the other
5 officer, the relief officer for the kitchen, and they get
6 just past the tower on toward the admin side, where
7 they're trying to get him on the ground, and they're, you
8 know, telling him to put his materials down and stuff
9 like that, and they're spraying him, or trying to spray
10 him, unsuccessfully, and then that is the time that,
11 supposedly, Wassenaar opens fire in their direction.

12 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, sir.

13 MR. GUENTHER: Okay. And isn't that side out
14 there that he's shooting out by the air conditioner?

15 FEMALE OFFICER: No, sir.

16 MR. GUENTHER: It's the other side.

17 FEMALE OFFICER: It's the other side, where the
18 gates open up for the blue yard and the red yard.

19 MR. GUENTHER: Okay.

20 FEMALE OFFICER: He was firing out that side.

21 MR. GUENTHER: And he's -- you're qualified on
22 the AR-15.

23 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, sir.

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24 MR. GUENTHER: He's shooting through the fences?

25 FEMALE OFFICER: I'm not sure. I think -- I'm

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1 not -- I'm on the ground, so I'm not -- that blue side
2 gate has to be open, because Coy got in somehow, and it
3 wasn't done by nobody in the tower, so it must have been
4 done when I was upstairs and that gate got opened.

5 MR. GUENTHER: Okay. And the last question that
6 I have is when the console -- the console on the first
7 floor was disabled?

8 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, sir.

9 MR. GUENTHER: So the only way to operate
10 anything in the tower was off the second floor.

11 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes, sir.

12 MR. GUENTHER: And was that console fully
13 operational?

14 FEMALE OFFICER: As far as I'm aware of, yes,
15 sir.

16 MR. GUENTHER: Okay.

17 FEMALE OFFICER: I found it very unique that it
18 was turned off and the key was gone, because I've worked
19 in the tower before, have been in there several times,
20 and each time, the key was always in it and it was always
21 on. So it was kind of unique that it was turned off.

22 MR. BURKE: The one on the second floor or the
23 first floor?

24 FEMALE OFFICER: The first floor.

25 MR. BURKE: The first floor, the key was turned

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1 off on that shift.

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2 FEMALE OFFICER: The key was turned off and the
3 key was missing, but when I walked in on shift, it was
4 already turned off and the key was missing. Now, who had
5 it, I have no idea, but that's how it was when we came on
6 shift.

7 MR. GUENTHER: Again, thank you very much --

8 FEMALE OFFICER: You're welcome.

9 MR. GUENTHER: -- for your patience and for your
10 endurance.

11 MR. BURKE: Why do you think Coy surrendered
12 alive?

13 FEMALE OFFICER: I was told because of his dad,
14 slash, uncle, whatever you want to call him.

15 MR. BURKE: He had an impact on him.

16 FEMALE OFFICER: That's what I was told, yes.

17 MR. BURKE: When you would do a shift change
18 from the tower and the new shift was coming on, what kind
19 of identification process would you have at that point?

20 FEMALE OFFICER: You just knew day shift. I
21 mean, they've relieved you several times. There was
22 always an officer out there that you could recognize. I
23 mean, I was never relieved by somebody I didn't recognize
24 as a fellow officer from a different shift.

25 MR. BURKE: Did you overhear any conversations

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1 between inmates as to why they released Officer Auch
2 first instead of you?

3 FEMALE OFFICER: Yes. I suppose you want me to
4 tell you.

5 MR. BURKE: It's up to you.

6 FEMALE OFFICER: Well, you know, they said that

7 he was young, he had his life, and they didn't think that
8 he'd be working for the Department of Corrections
9 anymore. And I guess the night before, I kind of ticked
10 them off because, I guess while I was asleep, I was
11 trying to get out of my handcuffs, which, I think I was
12 just rearranging them.

13 MR. BURKE: Are you going to work for the
14 Department of Corrections again?

15 FEMALE OFFICER: At this time, I really don't
16 know. At times, I want to go at it full straight, go in
17 there, do a security check, and show the inmates that
18 they haven't knocked me down. And then other times, it's
19 hard. When you look at your uniform and you freak out,
20 it makes you wonder, think twice.

21 MR. BURKE: Well, I want to really thank you,
22 all of us want to thank you for coming today. Not only
23 were you extremely helpful to this panel and its mission,
24 but you were incredibly inspiring to us and to everyone
25 that's heard this. You're a very courageous individual.

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1 I want to thank you, and everyone regrets what you had to
2 go through, but you are a very strong individual, and I
3 really, really want to thank you for being here today and
4 doing this.

5 FEMALE OFFICER: Thank you for allowing me to be
6 here and speak my mind.

7 MR. BURKE: Thank you, Officer.

8 MR. GUENTHER: Good luck, whatever you decide
9 you want to do.

10 FEMALE OFFICER: God will know. God only knows.

11 MR. GUENTHER: We're kind of hopeful you'll come

12 back.

13 MR. BURKE: We'll take a break here.

14 (Recess at 3:42; resumed at 4:03.)

15 MR. BURKE: Hi, I'm Dennis Burke. I'm the
16 Governor's co-chief of staff of policy. I'm one of three
17 co-chairs of this advisory ad hoc panel that was put
18 together by the Governor to review the incident on
19 January 18th that you were involved in. And as you
20 probably have heard, we've had several hearings already,
21 close to 25 hours of testimony, briefings. We went out
22 and did a tour of the facility, got briefings out there
23 too, and the Governor has charged us with looking at the,
24 not only the incident but other factors that might have
25 led up to it, other issues out at the facility, and other

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1 issues of Corrections in general, including staffing,
2 training, pay, et cetera. So there have been a lot of
3 discussions about that too.

4 But we thank you for coming today to describe
5 what happened to you and the incidents of that morning.
6 But I want the others here to introduce themselves too,
7 and then, after you make whatever remarks you would like
8 to make and description and recollection of what
9 happened, if we could ask you questions about that, we'd
10 appreciate that.

11 OFFICER CORNETT: Thank you.

12 MR. BURKE: Grant Woods, one of our co-chairs.

13 MR. WOODS: I'm Grant Woods. I'm a lawyer. I
14 was Attorney General from '91 to '99. I think this
15 thing -- the main thing I want to assure you is, we're
16 just trying to figure out what happened and how to make

17 it -- situations better for officers so that this doesn't
18 happen again. And I think we can assure you that we just
19 want you to be candid, and anything -- there would never
20 be a situation where there would be reprisals or anything
21 like that because of what was said. You are protected
22 under the law in Arizona. We will certainly make sure
23 that the law is enforced. So I don't -- I really don't
24 think you have to worry about that.

25 The main thing is -- and we're not really

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1 looking to cast blame, necessarily. We're just trying to
2 figure out what can be done to improve things so that
3 this doesn't happen again.

4 OFFICER CORNETT: Okay.

5 MR. BURKE: Herb Guenther.

6 MR. GUENTHER: Yeah, Herb Guenther. And I'm
7 kind of the different kid on the block. I was an
8 ex-legislator, served as a co-chair of the Joint Select
9 Committee, Oversight Committee on Corrections. I had
10 that good fortune. And when I was in the House, I also
11 did some studies on staffing of all of the prisons in
12 this state. Currently, I'm the director of the
13 Department of Water Resources.

14 And we, again, are here to get as much
15 information so that we can make recommendations for
16 constructive changes that will make your environment
17 better, make our prisons safer, and hopefully improve not
18 only your working environment but your living conditions
19 by reducing turnover, enhancing recruitment and
20 retention.

21 And so that's where we're headed. We're not

22 here to probe and punish. We're here to just get
23 information. And as Grant said, you're totally protected
24 here. I've also done a lot of work with Corrections
25 on -- for other Corrections employees when I was in the

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1 legislature on some whistle-blowing kind of incidents, so
2 I'm fully familiar with that, and I hope you just tell us
3 how you see it and how you feel.

4 OFFICER CORNETT: Okay.

5 MR. GUENTHER: Thanks for being here.

6 MR. BURKE: Leesa Morrison.

7 MS. MORRISON: Hi. We just met. I'm Leesa
8 Berens Morrison. I'm currently the director of the
9 Department of Liquor, and prior to that, for 17 years, I
10 was an Assistant AG at the Attorney General's Office.

11 I echo what everybody else has said. Thank you
12 for coming.

13 OFFICER CORNETT: You're welcome.

14 MS. MORRISON: And I look forward to hearing
15 what you have to say, about your suggestions, your
16 thoughts, your opinions.

17 OFFICER CORNETT: Okay.

18 MR. BURKE: Officer, there's several other
19 panelists who were unable to attend today for various
20 reasons, but as you can see, we have a court reporter, so
21 we're transcribing it, and then we'll provide that also
22 to the general public and they'll get a copy of that. So
23 thank you once again.

24 OFFICER CORNETT: You're welcome.

25 MR. BURKE: So what happened on January 18th?

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1 OFFICER CORNETT: Got to work at about 4:45, 45
2 minutes early, like I get there early every day. This
3 particular day, it was my first day of day shift. Wanted
4 to get there early to take care of things.

5 Got my radios -- my radio, my key set, and
6 started walking up the --

7 MR. BURKE: You might have to speak up a little
8 higher for the -- thank you.

9 OFFICER CORNETT: Started walking up the
10 sidewalk to the chow hall.

11 I got into the chow hall. I opened the door.
12 And I stopped for a second. I looked around. And I
13 didn't see any inmates in there. And I thought something
14 was strange. But I just kind of justified it and said,
15 well, he must not have called in the kitchen workers
16 yet.

17 I look at the office, which is up to the left,
18 and I saw all the lights off, and the tool room door was
19 open, and the light was on in the tool room. And I
20 thought something was strange about that too, but I just
21 figured he's probably doing a tool inventory. So I
22 justified that one.

23 And I look over to my left, and I see Inmate Coy
24 with his head pretty much all the way through the food
25 trap, talking to somebody. I didn't know who it was. I

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1 just figured he was handing out trays to other inmates.

2 And I started to walk towards the office, I got
3 about halfway through the kitchen, and he picked his head
4 up and shut the trap and looked at me and said, "What's
5 going on?" He looked kind of startled.

6 And I'm like, "I don't know. You tell me."

7 And I started walking up the ramp to the office,
8 and before I knew it, I saw his hand on my arm, and I
9 turned around and looked at him, and he looked back at
10 me, and I looked down because I felt something poking in
11 my side, and I saw the shank. And I put my hands up, and
12 I said, "Hey, what's going on? Calm down. What's going
13 on?"

14 And he kind of looked at me and said some
15 explicit words and told me to get in the office and "do
16 what you're told."

17 I said, "Okay. Not a problem."

18 So we walked the rest of the way up the ramp,
19 and we get into the office, and I look down on the floor,
20 and I see the food service worker on the floor, hog-tied,
21 and I see Officer Martin handcuffed to the tool cage in
22 his boxers and his T-shirt with an apron over his head.
23 And it still didn't register what was happening.

24 And he pushed me into the tool room and slammed
25 me up against the tool cage and grabbed my keys, grabbed

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1 my radio, grabbed my handcuffs, and immediately put the
2 cuffs on my right arm as tight as he could put them and
3 hung me on top of the tool cage. I was pretty much
4 hanging by my hand and my tiptoes. And I left the office
5 for five minutes to go back out on the floor. For what,
6 I don't know.

7 I asked Officer Martin, I said, "What's going
8 on? What's happening? What's going on?"

9 He had an apron over his head, so he couldn't
10 see who I was. And he asked me, "Who is that?"

11 And I said, "It's Cornett."
 12 And he said, "Just don't do anything stupid.
 13 Don't do anything stupid, because, you know, you never
 14 know what's going to happen."
 15 And I said, "Well, what if I shut the door or we
 16 grab him when he walks in or something?" Because I said,
 17 "We've got to do something. I can't just sit like this.
 18 We've got to do something."
 19 Well, I asked Officer Martin after that, I said,
 20 "Do you think he's going to kill us?"
 21 He said, "Probably."
 22 And, you know, my heart is beating out of my
 23 chest by now. I'm thinking about my family and, you
 24 know, thinking about how I'm going to survive.
 25 And he came back in the office for something --

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1 MR. BURKE: Take your time. No problem.
 2 OFFICER CORNETT: Anyway, came back in the
 3 office for something.
 4 The phone rang. And he answered the phone like
 5 he was Officer Martin, changed the pitch of his voice so
 6 he'd sound like him. And nobody answered. So he hung it
 7 up. And he started walking back towards the tool room.
 8 And I just figured -- just figured this is it. This is
 9 it. He's going to come back in, because he thought
 10 somebody found out, and the biggest shank I'd ever seen
 11 in my entire life is going to be stuck right through me.
 12 And that was it.
 13 He came in, and I just, my whole body just kind
 14 of tightened up, you know, just getting ready to get
 15 stuck with it.

16 MR. BURKE: Did you have much contact with Coy
17 before that?

18 OFFICER CORNETT: Minimal. Minimal.

19 And he comes back in there, and luckily, a call
20 came over the radio, and it said Thunder Horse was coming
21 to eat, which is another inmate, and he kind of looked
22 around for a minute and took the radio and put it up to
23 Martin's mouth and told him, "Tell him that you're coming
24 to the door, tell him you're out."

25 So Martin said it, and stood there for a second,

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1 and I kind of looked over my shoulder, and I could see
2 him looking at me and Martin. I wasn't sure what he was
3 thinking, if he was just going to go ahead and finish us
4 or if he was going to take one of us to the door. And I
5 guess he had to make a decision of who he wanted to go.
6 Obviously, I'm the only one with a uniform on, I'm going
7 to go. So he said "You," and he grabbed me by the back
8 of my jacket and turned me around a little bit and -- I
9 guess so I would have my back to him, and he took the key
10 out of one of the key sets that he had and he undid the
11 cuff from my hand and left the key in the cuff hanging in
12 the tool cage, and said, "Let's go."

13 I said, "All right." I put my hands back up so
14 he wouldn't think I was being aggressive towards him or
15 anything.

16 And he shoved the shank in my back again and
17 said, "If you do anything, you're done."

18 I said, "You'll get no problems out of me.
19 Don't worry about that. I'll do whatever you want me to
20 do."

21 So we started walking down the ramp, and he said
22 that he's not the only one involved, there's many more
23 people involved, not just him.

24 MR. BURKE: He said many more?

25 OFFICER CORNETT: Yeah, he said many more. And

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1 I said, "Okay." So I figured I'm going to the door to
2 open it for another inmate that's going to come in and
3 help him.

4 And he said, "If you do anything, you're done,"
5 again.

6 I told him that, you know, "I've got a family.
7 I've got a baby on the way. I don't want to die. I
8 want -- you know, I'll do whatever you want me to do,
9 whatever will keep me alive."

10 And he just looked at me and shook his head and
11 said, "Okay" and said -- I'm going to just go ahead and
12 say it. He said, "I don't give a fuck."

13 And I put my hands back down to my side, and I
14 just kind of, tried not to look at him, because I didn't
15 want to make him mad. And we walked to the door, and he
16 kind of pushed me over to the side, by the handle, picked
17 the key out of the key ring, he knew what key it was,
18 gave me the key set and said, "Open the door," and he put
19 his shank in a hair net box to try to conceal it, because
20 he knew that there was two officers standing out there.
21 I didn't know. And he said, "Open the door. Don't do
22 anything stupid."

23 I said, "Okay." And he's standing about maybe
24 two and a half, three feet away from me. And I put the
25 key in the door, and I opened it real slow, and I kind of

1 peeked around the corner, expecting to see an inmate,
2 because I was getting ready to defend myself, just in
3 case something happened, again, and I saw Officer Kelly
4 standing there. And a split second decision, I told
5 myself I'm not going back in there, whether I have to die
6 fighting or I have to die running or whatever. And I
7 just took off. Hit the door and tried to push him out of
8 the way. I'm pretty sure I said, "Move." And got about
9 halfway through the chow hall, and I looked back, and I
10 saw Coy come out of the door, and he swung the shank at
11 Officer Kelly. I wasn't sure if he hit him or not. And
12 I thought about going back there to help, but I just
13 figured, I'm already this far out, I might as well go
14 ahead up to admin and get help. I hope, pray to God he's
15 all right, but two of us down isn't going to help any of
16 us.

17 MR. BURKE: You saw Kelly shanked by Coy, or --

18 OFFICER CORNETT: I saw him come out of the door
19 halfway, and he swung it. He kind of like stomped his
20 foot and came out of the door and swung it. I think it
21 was above his head, because Kelly was a shorter guy. I
22 think it went above his head. But I'm not sure if it did
23 or not.

24 And I thought about going back to help, but I
25 just figured I should go get help. Obviously nobody

1 knows what's going on. I should go -- I'm going to go
2 run out on the yard, call an IMS, whatever I've got to
3 do. I don't have a radio anymore by this point.

4 So I get out of the door, and I guess Coy came
5 all the way out and the door shut behind him, and I took
6 the keys with me when I ran, so when the door shut, he
7 couldn't get back in the kitchen. He didn't have another
8 key set.

9 And I ran to the door, thank God that the outer
10 door to the chow hall was open so I didn't have to fumble
11 through the key set, and I pushed it open, and I saw
12 another inmate coming up, and I said, this guy is
13 involved. And I bum-rushed him and I put him on the
14 ground, and I told him, "Stay on the ground. Stay on the
15 ground. Don't move."

16 And he said, "What's going on?"

17 I said, "You know what's going on."

18 And I checked his bag for weapons -- this is all
19 within like a span of 30 seconds. And I didn't see
20 anything. And the next thing you know, Coy comes out of
21 the chow hall, and he opens the door and he stands there
22 for a second, and he holds the shank above his head, and
23 he goes, "Hey," at the top of his lungs.

24 And I looked back, and I said, "Oh, my God. I'm
25 taking off. I'm out of here now." And I tried to like

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1 snatch up the bag that the other inmate had, but --

2 MR. BURKE: Who was that other inmate?

3 OFFICER CORNETT: Thunder Horse.

4 MR. BURKE: Thunder Horse.

5 OFFICER CORNETT: Yeah.

6 And I tried to get his bag, and I just took off,
7 and Coy started running. And I don't even remember
8 touching the ground, I was running so fast. And I got up

9 to admin, and I guess Officer Debaugh had already called
10 an IMS. And I'm screaming at the tower, "Call an IMS."
11 But I'm looking up there, and I'm like, "What's going on
12 here? What's going on here? Call an IMS." No movement
13 or nothing.

14 So I get up to the admin gate, and I see a
15 sergeant coming out and two officers, and I tell him, I
16 said, "Look. They've got Officer Martin in the kitchen,
17 and he's handcuffed, and food service is hog-tied to the
18 floor. They've got weapons. I got out. You guys need
19 to go down there and do something. Call an IMS. Call an
20 IMS." I didn't know the IMS had already been called.

21 So me and two officers and the sergeant go back
22 to try to make the inmate drop the weapon. And the
23 lieutenant is out there, and we're yelling at him, "Drop
24 the weapon. Drop the weapon."

25 And he's like swinging at everybody, within

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1 inches of everybody, saying, "You drop it. You get on
2 the ground."

3 The next thing you know, I hear boom, boom,
4 boom. I mean, I was so close, it made my ears ring. And
5 I'm looking at the top of the tower, and I'm telling
6 myself, "Why isn't this inmate going down? They're
7 firing at him. What's going on here?"

8 And I hear another shot, like boom, and then I
9 hear Sergeant McCain say, "Why is my weapon on the
10 floor? Why is my rifle on the floor? What are you
11 doing? You're shooting at me."

12 And Lieutenant Jones said, "What are you doing?
13 Officer, put that thing down. What's going on here?"

14 And then he says, "What are you shooting at?"
15 And he says, "You."
16 And then Coy starts jumping up and down, saying,
17 you know, "I've got the man on my side. I've got brown
18 on my side."
19 And then everybody says, "Clear the yard."
20 Well, the captain was coming down to the yard,
21 and we met him at the admin gate, and he said, "What's
22 going on?"
23 I said, "I think there's an inmate in the
24 tower. I think there's an inmate in the tower."
25 They said, "You have an inmate in your tower?"

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1 I said, "I don't know if it's an inmate or not.
2 I don't know."
3 And we heard over the radio, they said, "Tower,
4 are you code 4?"
5 And they said, "We're code 4. We have an inmate
6 cuffed up on the floor in the tower."
7 And I told the captain, I said, "No. There's an
8 inmate in the tower. There's an inmate in the tower."
9 And that's when they cleared the yard, and
10 that's when everybody found out what was going on.
11 MR. BURKE: You indicated earlier that you
12 showed up for work early. So you were there at 4:45?
13 OFFICER CORNETT: I got there right at -- well,
14 when I looked at my watch, it said 4:45. I don't know
15 what their watches were set at.
16 MR. BURKE: So you were supposed to be there at
17 5:00?
18 OFFICER CORNETT: 5:30.

19 MR. BURKE: 5:30?
20 OFFICER CORNETT: Yeah.
21 MR. BURKE: So you were 45 minutes early?
22 OFFICER CORNETT: Uh-huh.
23 MR. BURKE: What did you expect to see when you
24 went into the kitchen 45 minutes early?
25 OFFICER CORNETT: I expected to see inmates.

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1 But this is my first day of day shift. You know, I
2 figured maybe he called them in late or something. It
3 was Sunday, and I don't know what time they feed on a
4 Sunday. I would guess it's around 7 o'clock or something
5 like that.
6 But, yeah, I expected to see inmates in the
7 kitchen, but, you know, like I said, my first day of day
8 shift, I don't -- I didn't know what was going on.
9 MR. BURKE: Would you be going in to replace
10 Martin then?
11 OFFICER CORNETT: Yeah.
12 MR. BURKE: So you would be going in, and you'd
13 be the only officer in the kitchen.
14 OFFICER CORNETT: I think he'd be there until
15 like 6:40 or something like that.
16 MR. BURKE: So there would be an overlap of some
17 time between the two of you.
18 OFFICER CORNETT: Not very much, though. A
19 little bit.
20 MR. BURKE: I have some more, but I'll -- Grant,
21 do you have any?
22 MR. WOODS: I just had a couple questions.
23 Officer, do you think -- well, it's a

24 coincidence, I guess, it just happened to be your first
25 day on day shift?

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1 OFFICER CORNETT: Well, it could have been. I
2 don't know. I mean, inmates were asking, you know --
3 they're curious to know if I'm going from swing shift to
4 day shift, because some of the inmates don't like me,
5 some of them do. You know, they want to know which shift
6 I'm going to. You know, it could have been a
7 coincidence, but I don't know. Anything is possible.

8 MR. WOODS: Had inmates asked?

9 OFFICER CORNETT: Yeah, a few.

10 MR. WOODS: And were they told?

11 OFFICER CORNETT: Yeah.

12 MR. WOODS: Do you think -- do you think the
13 staffing is adequate in the kitchen there, to only have
14 one officer there?

15 OFFICER CORNETT: No.

16 MR. WOODS: How many officers do you think --
17 additional officers are needed?

18 OFFICER CORNETT: Well, when you have 30 to 35
19 to 40 inmates in there at one time, one set of eyes isn't
20 enough. Two is really not enough. I mean, I'm not
21 asking for one on one with the inmates, but I want enough
22 officers in there so that I feel safe, they feel safe,
23 and if something does happen, somebody is going to be
24 able to know. Even if you figure you've got three
25 officers in there and you've got 35 inmates, it wouldn't

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1 take much for them to take you over, really. It wouldn't
2 take much at all.

3 I don't know what -- I really can't say what an
4 adequate number would be.

5 MR. WOODS: But a lot more than that. A lot
6 more than one.

7 OFFICER CORNETT: Three is workable, but, you
8 know -- I mean, two is workable. As long as you've got
9 somebody that can, you know, call an IMS or something if
10 something happens. But, you know, who's to say what's
11 adequate, what's safer.

12 MR. WOODS: These two inmates were in for a long
13 time, really, forever, and had a pretty bad history.
14 Does it concern you that they were allowed access to the
15 kitchen and potential weapons, things in the kitchen?

16 OFFICER CORNETT: Absolutely. That's one of my
17 biggest concerns is -- I don't like pointing the fingers
18 or laying the blame on anybody. It happened. Nobody did
19 anything wrong. It's just events that took place that,
20 it just happened. But how an inmate that has 100-some-
21 odd years is convicted of rape, is able to work around
22 sharp tools, females, with minimal supervision, it's
23 unacceptable to me. Put my life in danger and everybody
24 else that was involved. It's unacceptable to me. That's
25 just my opinion.

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1 MR. WOODS: Did you know, for example, on that
2 day, did you know that inmates were working in the
3 kitchen who had that sort of situation, that sort of
4 background, and were facing that sort of sentence?

5 OFFICER CORNETT: I know there's inmates in
6 there for murder and rape. I know there's inmates in
7 there. I didn't know there was inmates in there that got

8 175 years.

9 MR. WOODS: Is that your main concern? Because
10 they have nothing to lose?

11 OFFICER CORNETT: You know, I've worked with
12 inmates for the last four years. I don't really have a
13 problem working with an inmate that's got 175 years. I
14 can deal with that. But it's -- it has to be in a
15 controlled environment, not somewhere where he can duck
16 in a room or go hide in the back dry storage area or take
17 a tool with him somewhere and wait around the corner from
18 me. Somewhere where it's controlled. Not -- I mean, can
19 you imagine just being by yourself, in a closed-in area
20 like this, you're the only one with a key set, if he
21 decides he wants to do something? A radio is not
22 enough. By the time somebody got there, I'd be dead,
23 which almost happened this time.

24 MR. WOODS: And having female unarmed workers in
25 with convicted rapists, do you think that's a good idea?

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1 OFFICER CORNETT: No. No. Not a good idea at
2 all. I mean, look what happened. I tell them all the
3 time, I'm like, you know, "You have to watch who you're
4 around. Just because they're talking to you and they're,
5 you know, friendly with you, these guys could take you in
6 the back room and rape you at any point, anytime they
7 wanted to. And, you know, I need to know where you are
8 at all times."

9 But she didn't have a chance, really. When they
10 took Officer Martin's stuff, what could he do? Fight?
11 Get killed? You know, what could he do? I understand.
12 I know exactly what he's going through. What could he

13 do? He's helpless, just like me. Helpless.

14 MR. WOODS: When you listened to Officer Martin
15 responding under duress there on the radio, I think the
16 question has come up of whether more experienced people
17 on the other end might have been able to -- despite the
18 words that he said, might have been able to pick up that
19 something wasn't right. What do you think about that?
20 You listened to it.

21 OFFICER CORNETT: Probably not. Probably not.
22 He was pretty calm. Pretty calm. Me, being what they
23 consider a veteran on the yard, having four years,
24 probably wouldn't even have picked up on it, really.

25 I just think that, you've got one officer in the

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1 kitchen, it's graveyard, a radio call saying, "Are you
2 okay?" is not good enough. Me personally, I don't think
3 that's good enough at all. I think it should be a
4 physical check, physical check by a supervisor or
5 whatever it has to be.

6 If I -- you know, people don't -- people don't
7 really recognize my voice. I don't recognize everybody
8 else's voice. You know, how easy would it be for an
9 inmate to take the radio and say, "Hey, yeah, I'm okay."
10 It was done. It happened. That's not good enough.
11 Somebody -- somebody could have died.

12 MR. WOODS: And what do you think about cameras
13 in the kitchen area?

14 OFFICER CORNETT: Need them. Been asking for
15 them. Got to be there. It's a must. I'll work in the
16 kitchen no matter what. Even if we don't get any raises
17 or money out of this, I'll still be there. But, you

18 know, I want everybody that's there to be somewhat
 19 content where they're at and happy and feel as safe as
 20 you can feel working in the prison system. You know, at
 21 least feel safe, that somebody is doing something.
 22 With the cameras in there, that's a must.
 23 That's just, like -- there is no second thought about
 24 that. They've got them in the chow hall. Why not -- why
 25 not in the kitchen area, where you've got staff back

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1 there? You've got --
 2 MR. WOODS: You mentioned that had been
 3 requested?
 4 OFFICER CORNETT: I've told them they need
 5 cameras back there. They know about it.
 6 MR. WOODS: Did you get a response?
 7 OFFICER CORNETT: I don't remember what I got.
 8 MR. WOODS: You didn't get cameras, though.
 9 OFFICER CORNETT: But we didn't get cameras.
 10 MR. WOODS: When Coy was pepper-sprayed out in
 11 the yard there, it didn't --
 12 OFFICER CORNETT: Might as well have poured
 13 water on him.
 14 MR. WOODS: What happened there? Was it
 15 ineffective because it just didn't work on him, or did
 16 it -- was he missed, or --
 17 OFFICER CORNETT: No, it got him. I mean, when
 18 it came out, it was like a cloud. But it really didn't
 19 affect him.
 20 MR. WOODS: What's your experience with pepper
 21 spray? Since that's all that you all are armed with,
 22 does it generally work, or is it pretty much --

23 OFFICER CORNETT: For something like that, no.
24 Something like that, where the inmate's adrenaline is to
25 its peak, it's not going to affect him. For, you know,

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1 to break up a fight or something like that, it would
2 probably work. It has worked. But, you know, I don't
3 know, how much stronger can they make it? Some people,
4 it works on. Some people, it doesn't. Just, you never
5 know who it's going to work on. The majority of the
6 inmates, I'd say yes, it probably works on them. But,
7 you know, I'm sure there's something else that can be
8 used other than a can of pepper spray.

9 It doesn't really make me feel safe, carrying a
10 can of pepper spray around. It's like, you shake it up
11 and the inmate kind of looks at it and laughs at you.
12 You know, it's no big deal.

13 Pretty much the only thing I have in there that
14 potentially will save my life is my radio. You know, my
15 handcuffs, if I have to restrain an inmate before it gets
16 violent. But those are my -- those are my only safety
17 devices, and I don't really feel safe with pepper spray.
18 It's not a big deal.

19 MR. WOODS: Is there anything you can think of
20 that you could have? I mean, we understand why you
21 don't -- the Department -- you can't carry guns around.

22 OFFICER CORNETT: No.

23 MR. WOODS: That would make it worse in this
24 situation. Is there anything else that you could have
25 that you don't have?

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1 OFFICER CORNETT: Off the top of my head, I
2 really -- really don't know off the top of my head. But
3 I'm sure there's something out there that's better than a
4 can of pepper spray.

5 MR. WOODS: What if you had something that you
6 could hit the inmate with?

7 OFFICER CORNETT: I don't know if that would be
8 a good idea or not, really. I mean --

9 MR. WOODS: They might take that?

10 OFFICER CORNETT: Could. Could. Unless you had
11 proper training on it.

12 I don't know. I wish I knew something. I wish
13 I could say something. But I just can't think of
14 anything off the top of my head. But I know there's
15 something out there. Somebody has a good idea.

16 MR. WOODS: All right. That's all I have.

17 MR. BURKE: Senator.

18 MR. GUENTHER: The -- when you left the chow
19 hall and you ran into Thunder Horse and then suddenly Coy
20 comes back out that door, you take off for admin, Coy
21 takes off after you, I mean, it just -- and you had no
22 idea the tower, at that point in time, had a hostage in
23 it.

24 OFFICER CORNETT: I had no clue.

25 MR. GUENTHER: Where did you apprehend -- where

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1 did you start -- where did you surround Coy and say, "Get
2 on the ground"? Where were you located?

3 OFFICER CORNETT: We got to the end of the
4 handrails that, when you're coming out of the chow hall,
5 between the end of the handrails and the rec gate by the

6 tower, right in that little circle. On the sidewalk.

7 MR. GUENTHER: On the B side of the tower.

8 OFFICER CORNETT: On the B side, yeah.

9 MR. GUENTHER: Chow hall side of the tower.

10 OFFICER CORNETT: Yeah. Yeah. He didn't really
11 go too far. He didn't really -- I think he knew that he
12 wasn't going to catch me, so he kind of stopped where he
13 was. I didn't look behind me to see what was happening,
14 because I just took off. So, when the other officers
15 came out of the chow hall, they had already started
16 surrounding him by the time I got back with the other
17 people to try to help.

18 MR. GUENTHER: Now, you're standing around Coy
19 there, and everybody is shouting, yelling at him, and
20 what have you, to get down. I guess even the prisoner on
21 the rec field was yelling at him. Right?

22 OFFICER CORNETT: Yep. Told him, "Put that
23 thing down. Are you crazy? Put that thing down."

24 MR. GUENTHER: And all of a sudden, somebody
25 starts firing an AR-15.

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1 OFFICER CORNETT: Sounded like a shotgun.

2 MR. GUENTHER: It sounded like a shotgun?

3 OFFICER CORNETT: That's what I thought it was.
4 I didn't actually see the weapon. I mean, I could see
5 like a silhouette, was kind of like turning, but --

6 MR. GUENTHER: And this was being fired from
7 the --

8 OFFICER CORNETT: From the gate, the blue gate.

9 MR. GUENTHER: To the blue field.

10 OFFICER CORNETT: To the blue -- towards the

11 blue rec field. Yeah.

12 MR. GUENTHER: And he's firing through the gate,
13 or is the gate open?

14 OFFICER CORNETT: No, he had -- you know how
15 when you've got the gate hinged up, there's a gap about
16 that far, and he had it through there, and he could only
17 turn it so far, didn't really know what he was doing with
18 it. He could only turn it so far. I think that's what
19 helped everybody is that he couldn't maneuver it. He had
20 some pretty straight on shots, and he missed.

21 MR. GUENTHER: About how far away was he when he
22 was firing this rifle from where you guys were?

23 OFFICER CORNETT: I was like here, and the
24 sergeant was like right here, the lieutenant was about
25 where you are, and I think there was two officers up

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1 there, and those blue chairs right there, that was the
2 tower gate. The lieutenant was right about where you
3 are.

4 MR. GUENTHER: Where Dennis is right over there?

5 OFFICER CORNETT: Well -- yeah. That's the
6 gate, in that area. And --

7 MR. BURKE: For the record, how many feet is
8 that?

9 OFFICER CORNETT: Probably, I'd say maybe, not
10 more than 15 feet away from him. Not more than 15 feet.
11 Because we were all, you know, telling Coy to put the
12 weapon down, and we were fairly close to him, within 10
13 feet of him.

14 MR. GUENTHER: But at that time, the gate was
15 not open, the blue gate.

16 OFFICER CORNETT: I didn't see it open.
17 MR. GUENTHER: Okay. And could you see the
18 muzzle flash?
19 OFFICER CORNETT: See the what?
20 MR. GUENTHER: Muzzle flash?
21 OFFICER CORNETT: No, I didn't. I was kind
22 of -- I saw everything, but I wasn't taking everything in
23 at the time.
24 MR. GUENTHER: If you were -- based upon your
25 experience, and you are experienced out there, I mean,

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1 you've been there, as you said, four years, which is a
2 long time for that person, these shanks, how often do you
3 run across shanks in our prison population, in your four
4 years?

5 OFFICER CORNETT: A few times. A few times.
6 Not -- not as often as you would think, though. Not as
7 often as you would think. They're pretty ingenious when
8 it comes to hiding them. There are spots you'd never
9 even think of. But I haven't seen any in the kitchen
10 that I remember, since I've been there.

11 MR. GUENTHER: You haven't seen any in the
12 kitchen.

13 OFFICER CORNETT: Uh-uh. But there's lots of
14 stuff that they could take and make it with.

15 MR. BURKE: Lots of stuff in the kitchen they
16 could make shanks out of?

17 OFFICER CORNETT: Stuff that probably should be
18 there because it's for food preparation purposes, but
19 easily accessible.

20 MR. GUENTHER: If you were to -- I mean, what's

21 really key in here is, obviously, where did they get the
22 materials to make the shanks, and then where did they
23 hide the shanks. Where do you think that they would more
24 than likely hide a shank, especially one, like you say,
25 that is one of the largest ones you've seen?

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1 OFFICER CORNETT: Yeah. It was huge.
2 Lots of places. Lots of places. In the
3 ceilings. In the drains.
4 MR. GUENTHER: In the kitchen? Or --
5 OFFICER CORNETT: In the kitchen, yeah. In the
6 kitchen, they could do that. In the drains.
7 In their house, there's not a whole heck of a
8 lot of places that they could hide it, except for in
9 their own property, and you can just tear that apart, be
10 able to find it.
11 But the kitchen is a huge area, and there's many
12 places. In the tops of the doors, there's a gap about
13 that big, and you can put it up in there.
14 MR. GUENTHER: Obviously, they have to get the
15 materials, and then they have to make it. Well, there
16 doesn't seem like there would probably be enough time for
17 them to sit around in the kitchen and make a shank.
18 OFFICER CORNETT: Probably not.
19 MR. GUENTHER: So they'd probably have to make
20 it somewhere in their housing area?
21 OFFICER CORNETT: Yeah, they probably -- I'm
22 just speculating that they probably took the material
23 that they had back to their housing unit and made it
24 there, sharpened it on their concrete floor, and brought
25 it back to the kitchen.

1 MR. GUENTHER: And when they're being discharged
2 from the housing unit to go to their work assignment,
3 they're patted. Is that right?

4 OFFICER CORNETT: Should be. Should be. I
5 don't know if they were that night because I'm not -- I'm
6 not down there when they take the inmates out. I'm not
7 going to say that they don't. I just, I'm saying they
8 should be.

9 MR. GUENTHER: Okay. And then when they leave
10 the kitchen to go back to their housing area --

11 OFFICER CORNETT: They're stripped.

12 MR. GUENTHER: -- they're stripped.

13 OFFICER CORNETT: Yeah.

14 MR. GUENTHER: Okay. And that happens every
15 time they leave.

16 OFFICER CORNETT: Every time.

17 MR. GUENTHER: And yet they're still able to
18 make that stuff -- is there anything you would change on
19 the -- when they're leaving their housing hall to their
20 work assignment?

21 OFFICER CORNETT: They should be patted down
22 when they leave their house, when they get to the
23 kitchen. They should be stripped out and patted down
24 when they get back to their house. And that should be
25 just an absolute 110 percent, that should be done, no,

1 if, ands, or buts about it.

2 MR. GUENTHER: But a pat search is sufficient
3 when they're leaving their --

4 OFFICER CORNETT: When they leave their house,
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5 there's no reason to strip them out. You know what I
6 mean? A pat search is plenty. But when they're in the
7 kitchen and working around sharp tools, they need to be
8 stripped out, and when they get back to the housing unit,
9 just in case somebody missed something, pat them down so
10 it doesn't get back to their house.

11 But it should be a thorough patdown. I mean, I
12 don't know how much I can stress to the other officers
13 out there that when you do -- when you do a patdown and
14 it's not the right way, you're not only endangering my
15 life but everybody else's life around you. Do it the
16 proper way, because I can tell you, that thing wouldn't
17 have been nothing nice, getting stuck into you.

18 MR. GUENTHER: Around the kitchen area, do you
19 pull security checks, as far as looking for any hidden
20 contraband?

21 OFFICER CORNETT: I'm always walking the floor
22 looking for something. Always. I always look in their
23 usual hiding spots. I try to look for new ones. I think
24 that, if there is two officers in there or three officers
25 in there, one officer's main purpose should be walking

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1 around, looking for things that are unusual, looking for,
2 you know, parts missing off the oven racks or metal
3 pieces or --

4 MR. GUENTHER: How about searching up over the
5 freezer unit or the refrigeration unit?

6 OFFICER CORNETT: I do that all the time.

7 MR. GUENTHER: You do that.

8 OFFICER CORNETT: All the time.

9 MR. GUENTHER: Do you just get up on a ladder

10 with a light and --

11 OFFICER CORNETT: I just grab a crate, stand up
12 on the countertop and look on top of it.

13 MR. GUENTHER: Are there any systematic searches
14 of those areas?

15 OFFICER CORNETT: You know, like a big search
16 for the yard? They get done, but not very often. Not
17 very often. I think it should be -- now that you bring
18 that up, I think it should be a practice that it should
19 be done, you know, randomly a couple times a month.
20 That's at a minimum. That way, if they know something is
21 going to be searched, they'll think twice about putting
22 it there. You know, if they're getting their houses
23 searched on the yard, you know, randomly a couple times a
24 month, they'll think twice about hiding it there. And
25 they're inmates. They're going to do what they do. But,

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1 you know, we have to be there to try to stop them.
2 That's our job.

3 MR. GUENTHER: About -- just one more question,
4 and that is, did you feel sufficiently trained for this
5 incident, when you found yourself in it? What do you
6 think you might have benefitted by if you had some
7 additional training? What kind of training should it be?

8 OFFICER CORNETT: Maybe somebody that's been
9 through this -- not particularly this experience, but an
10 experience like this. I myself, I think that watching a
11 video or something like that really doesn't do a lot for
12 me. You know what I mean? It doesn't do a lot for me.
13 I'd rather hear somebody talking about it, somebody that
14 has had an experience or somebody that came close to

15 having an experience or somebody that knows a lot about
16 it, incorporate it into COTA or something like that, the
17 training academy.

18 I didn't have a clue. When this all started, I
19 was just kind of like, I was just going off instinct and
20 what I thought I should do. I bet you there's no officer
21 out there that will tell you they got trained for a
22 hostage situation. I'm sure of it. I mean, I can't
23 speak for everybody, but I know me, I didn't.

24 MR. GUENTHER: How about self-defense? Do you
25 feel like you had adequate self-defense training?

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1 OFFICER CORNETT: Probably not. Probably not.
2 Their self-defense training is good, it's good, but, you
3 know, I think it should be more. More, and it should be
4 often that you get trained for that.

5 Out of all the things, self-defense should be a
6 priority. Even if you don't ever have to use it in your
7 whole career, it should still be a priority, it should
8 still be at your fingertips that you know what to do. I
9 got trained on it, but I don't remember any of it, up
10 there, self-defense training. It's been so long ago.
11 Maybe it should be every four or five months, you get
12 trained on it, because you're going to forget things.
13 I'm not going to remember everything all the time. It
14 has to be put into your head several times, several
15 times, you know, just so you can remember. That's the
16 way it worked for me. Training.

17 MR. GUENTHER: When are you expecting your baby?

18 OFFICER CORNETT: In May.

19 MR. GUENTHER: Do you know what it's going to

20 be?

21 OFFICER CORNETT: A girl.

22 MR. GUENTHER: Have you got a name?

23 OFFICER CORNETT: Cheyenne.

24 MR. GUENTHER: Nice. Good luck to you.

25 OFFICER CORNETT: That was one of my deciding

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1 factors for running, escaping, I should say. Anybody
2 who's got family probably would have done the same
3 thing. Family is important. So is -- so is everybody I
4 work with. And I hope that somebody can benefit out of
5 this positively. Bad things have happened already,
6 there's nothing we can do about that, but now we can
7 start on the positive part of this whole thing and, you
8 know, make things safer for where we work, maybe get a
9 little more money for everybody so they'll be satisfied.

10 Why pay me -- I've had four years with the
11 Department. Why pay me what you're paying me now and
12 then I decide, "You know what? That's not enough money.
13 I'm going to quit," and I go somewhere else. Then you
14 hire somebody else, pay to train them, pay them money and
15 put them in my spot, now you've got to retrain them. Why
16 not pay me the money that I'm worth and I'll stay? I'll
17 stay, and I'll do the job that I'm supposed to do and you
18 won't have to worry about my experience, because I
19 already have it.

20 MR. GUENTHER: I hear you loud and clear.

21 OFFICER CORNETT: That's the way I feel about
22 it.

23 MR. GUENTHER: Good.

24 Thanks for sharing your ideas with us.

25 OFFICER CORNETT: You're welcome. Thank you.

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1 MR. BURKE: Leesa.

2 MS. MORRISON: I just have a couple questions.

3 You talked about salary, classification system,
4 staffing changes, camera in the kitchen, physical checks
5 instead of just the radio check, and a random check for
6 weapons. Is there anything else that you can think of
7 that would improve the physical structure or, if you want
8 to talk policies, so that this doesn't happen again?

9 OFFICER CORNETT: I think policies that are here
10 now need to be reinforced. But I'll be honest with you,
11 I'm not up to date on all the policies. Some of them, I
12 am. But training for that probably would help, you
13 know. Training for -- not just a 15-minute module
14 either. Some training, where you actually know what's
15 going on.

16 MS. MORRISON: When you're talking about the
17 15-minute module, are you talking about when you have
18 your staffing in the morning?

19 OFFICER CORNETT: Well, for me, for kitchen, I
20 don't even go to briefing. I just go straight from, when
21 I get there, to the kitchen, and I get briefed by the
22 other kitchen officers, so I don't get everything that
23 happens in the shift briefing.

24 It's a module they bring out, and it's 15
25 minutes, you're supposed to read it, it's supposed to

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1 last 15 minutes, whatever, but I think that it should be,
2 you know, like a -- they have a class, eight-hour class

3 for firearms. Why not have an eight-hour class for
4 policy? I'm the last one that says, "Oh, God, I don't
5 really want to go in there and learn policy," but you
6 need to know it.

7 MS. MORRISON: Do you have access to the
8 policies?

9 OFFICER CORNETT: On my computer, yeah.

10 MS. MORRISON: You have a computer yourself?

11 OFFICER CORNETT: In the kitchen. I don't have
12 one at home, but in the kitchen. I can look up policy if
13 I need to.

14 MS. MORRISON: Do you have any idea what the
15 shank was made out of? You clearly got a good view of
16 it.

17 OFFICER CORNETT: I think it was made out of --
18 they said that they had -- there was a band that went
19 around the milk crate, Shamrock milk crates. They took
20 them out a while back ago, but -- I heard this from
21 another inmate, that he said that Wassenaar told him,
22 "Hey, let me borrow that crate. I'm going to hold that
23 crate. Let me have that crate. I'll take care of
24 that." And it's a metal band that wraps around the milk
25 crate. Shamrock might still have some of them. I think

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1 that's a possibility, because I looked on the racks where
2 all the food is kept, and the weld marks on the shank are
3 too far apart.

4 MS. MORRISON: Because people were saying it was
5 oven racks?

6 OFFICER CORNETT: Yeah. I don't think that's
7 what it was.

8 MS. MORRISON: So, could you say it again? It's
9 the Shamrock wrap?

10 OFFICER CORNETT: It's on a milk crate. And it
11 goes around the top of the crate. Now, I'm not sure if
12 that's what it is, but that's a pretty good -- it could
13 be.

14 MS. MORRISON: Have you been able to share your
15 suggestions with your supervisors, the warden, out at
16 Lewis?

17 OFFICER CORNETT: Not really. I really
18 haven't -- not really. Not that they haven't, you
19 know -- not that I couldn't have went in there and said,
20 "Hey, D.W.," or, "Hey, boss, you know, this is what I
21 think." But I just haven't. It's not their fault.

22 MS. MORRISON: Anything else that you can
23 recommend that should be changed?

24 OFFICER CORNETT: I think, as far as, like,
25 supervisors go, they should be more in tune with their

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1 employees. You know, like you've got swing shift
2 sergeants, they should know what -- if your employees are
3 having family problems, whatever, you know, offer them
4 counseling if they need it, whatever. Just be their --
5 not just their friend -- not their friend, you know,
6 but -- I'm trying to put it into words. More helpful.
7 More helpful, as far as not just be there for eight hours
8 and "I'm done with you." I don't think -- personally, I
9 don't think you can just come in, be somebody's boss, and
10 expect them to do a good job for you. Be a little more
11 personable. Don't put on the DOC face, you know, and
12 have your employees work for you and expect them to do a

13 great job for you when, you know, you're going to be a
14 jerk to them.

15 MS. MORRISON: Thank you.

16 MR. BURKE: Officer, when you walked in the
17 kitchen that morning, you saw Coy by himself. Correct?

18 OFFICER CORNETT: Yeah.

19 MR. BURKE: Seeing the inmate there in the
20 kitchen with no officers, is that something that was
21 typical or low, medium, or high suspicion?

22 OFFICER CORNETT: I would say it would not be
23 typical. High suspicion.

24 MR. BURKE: High suspicion?

25 OFFICER CORNETT: Yeah. Of course -- well, it's

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1 graveyard. There's only one officer there. He could
2 have been -- he could have been anywhere. But, yeah,
3 it's a little suspicious that there's an inmate by
4 himself. And it was going through my mind. But you
5 never think -- you never think something like that is
6 happening. It didn't -- honestly, that didn't even cross
7 my mind. I was just going to see where Officer Martin
8 was, not, "Maybe they have him hostage," or something
9 like that. Never crossed my mind.

10 And that's just my own personal thing for being
11 complacent. Never be complacent. If it's a red flag,
12 don't ever justify it. Figure it out. I don't care how
13 small it is.

14 MR. BURKE: I have no other questions.

15 MR. WOODS: Let me just ask you, Officer, this
16 is a very traumatic experience that you went through, and
17 you were the victim of several crimes there. Oftentimes,

18 people can benefit after an experience like that from
19 talking to professionals or having some sort of
20 counseling. Has that been offered to you, or --

21 OFFICER CORNETT: Yeah. Actually, the CISD did
22 an excellent job. They talked to me the day it happened,
23 and they, you know, followed up with me, and I think I
24 just talked to somebody like a week ago. And he said, if
25 I need anything, you know, gave me his number, "Call me

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1 if you have any problems." They've been excellent.
2 That's one good thing that I don't see any problems with,
3 is they did an excellent job. Couldn't have asked for
4 more out of them.

5 MR. WOODS: And I think all of us, we thank you
6 for -- one, for coming here today and sharing with us,
7 but also for your service there. And we wish it hadn't
8 have happened, but you conducted yourself very well,
9 we're all proud of you, and we appreciate you coming in.

10 OFFICER CORNETT: My pleasure.

11 (The proceedings were concluded at 4:50 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Pamela J. Mayer, hereby certify that the foregoing pages, numbered 1 through 100, constitute a full, true, and accurate transcript of all proceedings had in the above matter, all done to the best of my skill and ability.

Pamela J. Mayer, RMR-CRR
Certified Court Reporter
Certificate No. 50207